Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

Alabama.

## TENANCY AND BUSINESS

Business and industry in Alabama realize that the future destiny of this State rests on agriculture.

Farming is the basis of our economic structure. When poverty reigns among our farmers, the wheels of business and industry are forced to a virtual standstill.

It is an obvious fact that as long as 64 per cent of our farm families are living on a gross annual income of $216, this portion of our farm population cannot consume more than $216 worth of goods and services. On such a standard of living automobiles, radios, furniture, electric refrigerators, bathtubs and baby buggies are out of the question. Indeed, such a standard forbids anything but the barest necessities of food, clothing and shelter, and sometimes only poor substitutes for these.

A suggestion that farmers in Alabama be given a bounty from any source merely to make it possible for them to consume goods and services would be foolish. On the other hand if Alabama farmers can be given an opportunity to produce enough to allow them to consume the goods and services they actually need, the whole State will reap the benefits.

Under a system of tenancy there is no incentive and little opportunity for tenant farmers to become economic and social assets. Every merchant and business man who has had dealings with both tenants and independent farmers knows the difference.

The Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill now pending in the House of Representatives is potentially a boon to business and industry just as it is potentially a boon to tenant farmers. Cotton mills cannot sell shirts and overalls to those without the means to buy; plow manufacturers cannot sell farm equipment; building material companies cannot sell lumber and nails for home construction.

The Bankhead-Jones bill would put no undue burden upon the government. The government would merely be an intermediary between the man who has idle capital to lend and the tenant farmer who has the incentive and ability to become an independent farmer.

### A CALL FOR ACTION

It is surprising that farm organizations have not been active in supporting the Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill.

Tenants and share-croppers as a whole are not members of any farm organization. But the welfare of tenants should be the concern of all farmers.

In the first place the farmers would have a much stronger voice in the affairs of government if their organizations were able to speak for a greater number. By seeking to increase the number of independent farmers—which is the purpose of the Bankhead bill—farm organizations would add to their own strength.

Furthermore the 36 per cent of the independent farmers in Alabama cannot hope to better their own lot unless something is done to aid the 64 per cent who are tenants and share-croppers. The land-owning farmer suffers from the competition of tenants, and the best means to remedy the situation is to reduce the number of tenants.

Tenant families for the most part are unable to bear their share of the responsibilities of government, and thus the burden falls on the shoulders of the independent farmers in an agricultural community. Land values in a community of home-owners are usually higher than in a tenant area.

The Alabama Farm Bureau Federation should lift its voice in a mighty roar in favor of the tenant farm bill now pending in the House. The bill will apparently die unless some interest is shown in its passage. No group should be more interested in the enactment of the tenant bill than the farmers themselves.

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Advertiser 5-16-36 Montgomery, Ala.

## SHARECROPPERS FIGHT FOR PAY INCREASE

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NEW ORLEANS, La., August-- (CNA)- A campaign to raise the wages of Alabama low-paid cotton laboerers was voted for unanimously by delegates attending the first convention of the Sharecroppers' Union which was held here last week.

While the bulk of the union's membership are in Alabama, the convention had to be held outside of that state on account of the long and violent campaign of terror and wholesale arrests directed by Alabama landlords and police against the union. The convention met secretly here to protect Louisiana delegates from the wrath of their landlords, as well as to thwart possible joint action by Alabama and Louisiana authorities to arrest the leaders of the union. Most of the union officials are Negroes.

Crusader News Agency

The delegates instructed the executive committee to conduct an inquiry into the possibility of organizing a strike to win a dollar a hundred pounds for cotton pickers and a dollar and a half a day for other farm labor. It would at the same time sound out cotton producers on the possibility of attempting to establish their right to gin and market their own cotton, a right now held exclusively by the landlords and big planters.

President Harry Williams and Secretary C. L. Johnson were directed to address an appeal to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union for the creation of a joint committee to carry out a united program based on the common needs and aims of both unions.

Forty regular and fraternal delegates from three states - Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana — took part in the three-day proceedings.

### THE COTTON-PICKER PROBLEM

In a recent thoughtful and sympathetic editorial on the problem of the cotton South as it faces the possibility of a cotton-picking machine that may ultimately displace vast hordes of cotton laborers, The Richmond Times-Dispatch says:

The next week or two probably will determine whether the South is in for a revolution in its agricultural economy. Final tests are about to be made with the Rust mechanical cotton picker. If the picker functions as its inventors believe it will, the expectation is that something like 1,000,000 sharecroppers in the cotton belt will find themselves before long without a livelihood. The first test, on Monday at Stoneville, Miss., revealed "imperfections," but "convinced many that the idea of a mechanical cotton picker is sound," according to dispatches.

Many mechanical cotton pickers have been tried in past years and found wanting. If the contrivances of John and Mack Rust, two brothers of Memphis, is as efficient as they say, it will be one of the far-reaching developments in Southern history, comparable in its tremendous social effects to the invention of the cotton gin, which gave a severe setback to the antebellum movement for emancipation of the slaves.

The Rust brothers experimented with their picker at the Delta Experiment Station at Stoneville, Miss., in 1933, and Professor W. E. Ayers, assistant director in charge, pronounced it by far the best mechanical picker he had ever seen. Not only so, but he said it was ready for commercial production.

If John and Mack Rust wanted to sell their rights in the picker today to some large implement company, they could probably realize a handsome sum and be rid of any further worry over the manufacture of the device. But one of the remarkable things about the Rust brothers is that they are less interested in profits than they are in cushioning the impact of their invention upon the South's agricultural economy, and in holding to a minimum the devastation which might be wrought throughout the cotton belt by the sudden introduction of this invention on a large scale.

The Rusts, in fact, expect to devote a large part of their anticipated profits to facilitating adjustments in the cotton States, particularly in easing the lot of the million-odd sharecroppers whose mode of life will be drastically altered, if the invention comes up to advance predictions.

What is to become of the vast army of sharecroppers whose labor in the cotton fields may shortly be rendered superfluous by virtue of this invention? Unquestionably the initial effect will be a violent dislocation of the Southern economy, considerably worse than followed the Bankhead cotton control act. That statute threw large numbers of sharecroppers on the relief rolls through its limitation of production. The mechanical picker will have even more far-reaching consequences, if it is successful.

Yet this may be all for the best. The existing tenant-sharecropper system in the cotton belt is badly in need of overhauling. The squalor and degradation in which the bulk of the landless farmers live is appalling. Something will have to be done ultimately to remedy this state of affairs, and the process may as well begin now.

The 1,000,000 sharecroppers who may be left without even their present meager incomes will have to be provided for in some other way. It is unthinkable that they will be permitted to stay on the relief rolls for an indefinite period. Either they must be given the opportunity to purchase land of their own for subsistence farming, over a period of years with the aid of the Government, or they must be rehabilitated in some other way.

Meanwhile, the zero hour has almost arrived. The Rust mechanical cotton picker is about to undergo its final tests. The results of those tests may be catastrophic in their effects upon the agricultural economy of the South, and may seriously influence the South's future for the next century.

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The foregoing comments are from a lay journal. Now let us consult a technical cotton journal, The Textile World. Let us review an article by Mildred H. Barnwell in that journal and see what she has to say for our cotton economy.

The cotton farmer cannot afford to shy off mechanization or labor-saving machines because of social problems involved; no other industry has sacrificed modern and efficient equipment for hand labor. This is the conclusion reached by Mrs. Barnwell, executive assistant of the Southern Combed Yarn Spinners Association, after a special trip to investigate the Rust cotton picker.

"Figuring the actual savings in dollars and cents, the cotton producer can no more afford to refuse to use labor-saving devices in the handling of his crop than the cotton mill executive can afford to overlook new textile machinery developments," her article says. "Until the mechanical cotton picker is tried out for several seasons, operating day after day under farm and plantation conditions, operated by unskilled mechanics (Negroes mostly), one can only theorize as to its possibilities. It is safe to presume, however, that it will not create a violent economic upheaval.

"Actual farm labor—share croppers and tenants—will not be displaced. The sufferers will be the seasonal help, hired by the day, as supplementary labor. These laborers have jobs in town during the rest of the year—they will make them year-round.

"We shall produce more cotton at less cost than any other nation; we shall maintain high living standards on the farm; cotton will still be king."

Analyzing the market possibilities of the Rust cotton picker, Mrs. Barnwell states that its potential purchases fall into three classes. First, it will be more practical in actual operation in the flat lands of the Delta than anywhere else in the cotton belt, although its potential market stretches eastward from Dallas, Texas, to the Atlantic Seaboard.

The second volume market for the cotton picker consists of every farmer who owns a two-cylinder tractor.

The third market for the cotton picker will be the cooperative farms scattered here and there over the country. Included in this class is Soviet Russia. Through the Amtorg Corporation two outright sales have been made to the Russian Government and the machines, attended by mechanics from the Rust Brothers shops, have already been shipped to the U. S. S. R. where they will be in operation this Fall.

It is estimated by a practical businessman, who is also a planter, states the Textile World article, that the minimum cost of operating the Rust cotton picker, counting depreciation, obsolescence, interest on investment on picker as well as tractor to operate picker, together with fuel, labor and repair cost, would be $2.50 per hour or the theoretical cost of picking a bale of cotton with the mechanical picker would be $5 per bale as against the approximate $10 per bale, hand-picked at this season's wages. Theoretically, then, we have a saving of one cent per pound or $5 per bale on the picking cost.

# PICK COTTON OR QUIT, SAYS WPA

## State Administrator Rules Private Jobs Must Be Accepted

MONTGOMERY, Sept. 10.—(Special.)—Ray Crow, state director of the Works Progress Administration, today urged Alabama farmers who are unable to obtain sufficient cotton pickers to call upon the WPA for labor.

"Any employe of the WPA who declines to accept a bona fide offer of private employment, whatever the source, when such employment is offered at prevailing wages, will be discharged," Mr. Crow said.

"Farmers who are willing to provide transportation and pay a fair wage should communicate with the local WPA office and the labor will be made available immediately."

## Refusal To Shut Down WPA Jobs Is Upheld

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10.—(Special.)—Works Progress Administration officials here today upheld the stand taken by S. Tate Pease, Tennessee WPA administrator, in refusing to shut down WPA jobs until the cotton is picked.

WPA officials have been informed that in the Memphis and West Tennessee district wages now offered by cotton growers are 50 cents less on the hundred pounds of cotton picked than comparative WPA scales.

They contend that WPA workers need not accept private employment at less than what they term a "going wage."

"It has always been the WPA policy to give workers reasonable opportunity to accept temporary employment because this often results in permanent work," Corrington Gill, acting WPA administrator, said.

"However, a worker is not expected to accept private employment unless it is a full-time job, paying standard or going rate of wages."

farmers have applied to the Alabama Employment Service district office here for pickers.

"We've placed 6? cotton pickers already and could use 100 more," said M. C. Slaughter, manager of the Montgomery district office. "Many of the negroes don't seem to want to work in the fields, although the farmers are paying 50 cents a hundred pounds. We call them down to report for work but they never show up."

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MEMPHIS, TENN., Sept. 8—(AP)—Chamber of Commerce officials proposed today a sharp curtailment of relief activities in the Memphis area for 10 weeks, after planters complained of a shortage of cotton pickers.

"We have received reports from farmers in the Memphis territory saying they are unable to get cotton pickers because of relief activities," said Robert Snowden, chairman of the Chamber's agricultural committee. "It was reported those on relief have refused to work."

The proposal probably will be laid before county, city and relief officials tomorrow. S. Tate Pease, west Tennessee WPA director, said he was "open to the proposition."

"I believe the Government will agree with anything the city and county want to do in the matter."

With the cotton crop maturing unusually early, planters sent out hurry calls for pickers, offering to pay wages up to $1.25 100 pounds—the highest compensation since 1929.

Federal reemployment officials at Jonesboro, Ark., said they had unfilled orders for 1,500 pickers. The same number was requested of the office here.

WPA authorities in both Mississippi and Arkansas offered to release workers wishing to pick cotton, and to reinstate them after the picking season closed.

# County Facing Fall Shortage In Cotton Picke

Like other Dixie planters, Montgomery County farmers face a shortage of cotton pickers.

As the cotton picking movement swings up from south Alabama,

Alabama.

Agriculture - 1936

Condition of.

In Our Front Yard advertiser 12-31-36 Montgomery, Ala. —Spang

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

Alabama.

## THE SOUTH LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

The second annual conference of the Southern Policy Committee held at Chattanooga is of even greater significance than the 1935 conference at Atlanta.

Men of various shades of political philosophy including authors, farmers, journalists, ministers, politicians, educators and labor leaders gathered to discuss vital problems of the South, and their relation to national and international policies. The discussions were characterized by an acute awareness of the nature and importance of existing conditions.

Advertiser

No effort was made to apply a sugar-coating of sentimental defense to realities. The individuals attending the conference did not suffer from the delusion that everything in the South is all right and that time and national recovery will solve our ills.

5-12-36

As to the conclusions reached at the conference, there will of course be widespread differences of opinion. Indeed, those composing the conference failed to agree among themselves on many points. In setting forth proposals of a far-reaching and inclusive nature, it was recognized that such differences will arise. In fact, if the proposals were received with anything like general accord, that circumstance alone would indicate they were valueless.

Montgomery Adv.

Disagreement is healthy. Unanimity is not. The Nazis refuse to countenance opposition and thereby display their own lack of assurance.

The conference agreed whole-heartedly, and all far-sighted Southerners aware of actual conditions will agree with them, on the first step that must be taken, however. That is the immediate passage of the Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill at the present session of Congress. This bill, which has already passed the Senate and is pending in the House, offers an opportunity to strike at the basis of many of the South's ills.

The evils of increasing tenancy should be obvious. Farming is the economic foundation of the South. But at least 55 per cent of the South's farmers are tenants or share-croppers, and the percentage in Alabama is even greater.

Tenancy is the vital concern of the taxpayer, because the tenant does not and cannot bear his share of the tax burden; it is the concern of business because 10,000,000 people living on a gross, average income of $216 a year per family are able to buy neither the necessities nor the luxuries of life; it is the concern of labor, because tenancy constitutes an inexhaustible pool of unskilled workers depressing standards of wages; it is the concern of democratic government because, lacking in stability and education, the great mass of tenants constitute fertile fields for exploitation by demagogues.

The Bankhead bill represents no cure-all for the disease of tenancy, and it does not pretend to deal with more than a relatively small number of the total tenant population. It does, however, represent a determined effort to reduce tenancy which increased 10 per cent in the decade that has been called by some the most prosperous ever enjoyed by mankind.

And yet, though the Bankhead bill holds more promise for the future of the South than any phase of the New Deal developed thus far, there has been no formidable effort to speed its passage.

True, there has been no evident opposition to the bill, but that is not enough to insure its enactment. In general, tenants, whom the bill seeks to aid directly, have little voice in government. Apparently the general public is not fully awake to the fact that passage of the bill would benefit the whole people indirectly.

When the depression struck, those who had the ear of the Hoover Administration were given aid through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. When President Roosevelt went into office the home-owning middle class was heard and some 800,000 homes were refinanced at low interest rates under the Home Owners Loan Corporation. What the RFC did for big industries, banks and insurance companies, and what the HOLC did for home-owners, is what the sponsors of the tenant farm bill seek to do for the tenant.

The South will make a great mistake if it passes up its present opportunity.

## TWENTY APPLICATIONS FOR ONE FARM FAMILY

Editor The Advertiser:

I want to thank you for publishing my letter of the 21st in which I asked to find a farmer or some one who could use a negro family to the extent they might have food, shelter and clothes.

I am glad to tell you this letter did the work and did it well. I got 19 telephone calls and two calls in person wanting this family. Mr. H. C. Cobb, of Millbrook, a very fine man, was the first to call me by telephone. He, of course, got them. He sent in his truck early this morning and moved them to his farm and put them in a good, comfortable house. Telephone calls came from every direction, both long distance and local. The only thing I regretted I had good homes offered for 20 Negro families more than I could supply. This letter in your paper has convinced me thoroughly that if I had known of twenty more families of Negroes I could have placed them on farms with good men who would be glad to give them permanent homes.

My letter and the many responses I got, far and near, wanting families, has convinced me that so much loafing in Montgomery is unnecessary and becoming a nuisance, because right at this time there is plenty of work and homes they could get if they preferred to go on the farm.

W. F. PORTER.

307 St. Charles Avenue, Montgomery, Ala.

Montgomery, Ala. Advertiser
May 21, 1936

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## SECTIONALISM IN ALABAMA

There is no sectional prejudice of consequence in Alabama, but there is a lack of sentimental unity in the State, a lack of common understanding of mutual problems that afflicts the whole people.

Until 1861 there was political strife between "north" and "south" Alabama. Communication was limited, transportation was so slow that the citizens of the two sections rarely intermingled. Our historians have more than once remarked upon this impressively.

North Alabama, including especially the Tennessee Valley, does not know much about middle Alabama, including the Black Belt, it does not know much about South Alabama, including particularly the Wiregrass and the gulf country. West Alabama does not know much about East Alabama, and vice versa.

Throw all of these into reverse and you will find that no one section has the "feel" of any other section.

Alabama, for instance, is a "cotton" State, but north Alabama grows wheat, as well as cotton, while no other section grows wheat. Extreme South Alabama grows little cotton. That is especially true of Baldwin and Mobile counties. The lands in between vary in fertility from county to county. Some of them grow cotton readily, some of them to not. There are some bright dairy spots in Alabama, and some blank spots. Native pines grow in all counties, but there is no unity of action and opinion by all farmers of all sections.

The State needs terribly the services of one grand disinterested leader, a man who has no political ambition—but what could he hope to accomplish? What could such a man, with headquarters in Montgomery, for instance, say to all sections that would tend to unify them that would tend in short to arouse a common passion? What does Madison county know about Baldwin? What does Mobile county know about Chilton, about Pickens, about Tallapoosa?

Alabama is a highly sectionalized State, and The Advertiser, for one, does not know what to do about it.

ALABAMA CROPPERS TO
HOLD SECRET CONVENTION

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala., August--(CNA)- The time and place of the first convention of the heroic Sharecroppers Union will be kept secret to circumvent any possible acts of violence instigated by wealthy planters, union officials said last week. *Crusader News Agency*

The main point on the convention's agenda will be the discussion of preparations for a cotton-pickers strike in the state. A militant program, which will include the fight for higher wages and shorter hours, and against the robbery of croppers by the planters is expected to be [illegible]

The union, organized in 1931, has been successful in organizing thousands [illegible] croppers despite lynchings, kidnapings and torture of many of its members by armed agents in the pay of the planters and by sheriffs. Starting out with an exclusively Negro membership, the union succeeded in winning many white croppers and poor farmers to joint struggle with the Negro croppers for their mutual betterment.

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

# Economist Finds Arkansas Tenant Farms Nearly Doubled Since 1900

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., Aug. 30.—(AP)—Associate Economist H. W. Blalock, of the University of Arkansas College of Agriculture, said today that the number of tenants on farms in the State has nearly doubled since 1900.

Blalock, who recently completed a study made on 200 plantations in nine delta counties of Arkansas, said that between 1920 and 1930 tenancy increased more rapidly in the State than in the South as a whole.

His survey showed that during the 10-year period sharecroppers increased 60 per cent, share tenants 15 per cent, while renters, a more financially independent class of tenants, decreased 18 per cent. There was a decrease of more than 20 per cent in number of farms operated by their owners.

Referring to the decrease in the number of renters and an increase in wage hand labor, Blalock said that "there is a tendency for tenants to revert to a lower status during hard times. This is due to a loss of bargaining power of the tenant and also to a loss of mortgaged implements and livestock, as well as inability to purchase capital goods."

Blalock's study showed a 27 per cent increase in the number of white families on the 100 plantations in his survey and a 4 per cent decrease in the number of negro families. This trend follows that of the South as a whole, he declared.

The economist said that the number of farms owned by the persons who operated them in Arkansas totaled 85,895 as compared with 84,138 in 1900, an increase of 2 per cent in 35 years.

"The greatest number of fully owned farms in Arkansas was reached in 1920 when 98,037 were reported to the census bureau," Blalock said.

"Part-ownership, representing farmers who own part and rent part of the land, has increased 35 per cent since 1900. However, since 1930 when the greatest number — 16,412 — partly-owned farms were reported."

Nearly 70 per cent of the tenants on the 100 plantations studied by Blalock were sharecroppers. Twelve per cent were share tenants, 3 per cent renters, and 15 per cent wage hands.

Blalock said that although there has been a decrease in tenancy of 1 per cent since 1930, use of hand labor on Arkansas farms increased 23 per cent and the number of renters decreased 25 per cent during the five-year period. The year 1935 showed a 3 per cent increase in tenancy over 1934.

The greatest increase in tenancy was in the delta section of Arkansas, Blalock said.

# TENANCY COMMISSION OPENS PROBE MONDAY

## Arkansas Board Adopts 15-Point Program

Commercial Appeal

## APPOINTED BY FUTRELL

### Chairman C. E. Palmer Covers Age-Old Farm Problem in Detail—Some Questions Submitted in Advance for Study

9-16-36

By The Associated Press

HOT SPRINGS, Sept. 15.—C. E. Palmer, chairman of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission, announced tonight a 15-point program under which the group will attempt to solve one of the south's oldest economic problems.

The commission of 40 members, appointed by Governor Futrell, will hold its first meeting here Monday and Tuesday. Its activity will be preliminary to a proposed south-wide conference for which the state's governor recently received pledges of co-operation from governors of all cotton-growing states.

The program advanced today by Palmer covers the farm tenancy situation in detail. The chairman said the various phases probably will be referred to special committees for study and recommendation. Some of the questions will be submitted commission members in advance of Monday's opening session.

Commercial Appeal

**Program Outlined**

Palmer announced the following program:

1. Relations established by law and custom between land owners and tenants. Can they be improved to help the tenant without injustice or inequaity to the land owners?

2. State and federal supervision and assistance through farm agents, home demonstration agents, co-operative canning and meat preservation. Is anything else desirable?

3. Better housing. Shall we recommend a minimum?

4. Food for tenant and feed for his live stock. Gardens, chickens, cows, hogs, etc.

5. Raising of cotton requiring only approximately 100 to 125 day's work per year. What can we recommend to give employment during the remainder of the year?

6. United States surplus cotton production having to move into world commerce at prices based on supply and demand. What can we suggest to give cotton raisers a better price on that portion of their crop consumed in the United States in view of the fact so much of what they buy is produced under the protection of import tariffs?

**Social Items Included**

7. Eduction. Religion. Community education an dentertainment for both adults and children.

8. Furnishing the tenant. Are co-operatives possivle in this field? What can be done to enable them to be furnished the necessary foods and supplies at fair prices and low interest rates?

9. What rules or policies should cover the eviction of tenants?

10. What payment or credit, if any, should be allowed for proper care of the land, crop rotation and any improvement he may make?

11. Authorities seem to agree that the average time tenants spend on the same land is between two and three years. What can we recommend to increase this average time?

12. Medical attention and county health nursing.

13. Accelerating trend on larger plantations from sharecropper to the use of day labor.

14. County arbitration boards.

15. Farm home ownership.

**Study Homesteading**

A. What state lands are available for homesteading and should state lands now owned and hereafter acquired by tax delinquency or otherwise be reserved first for homesteading where suitable for agriculture?

B. If so, at what prices, terms and in what size tracts should they be sold for homesteading?

C. Can the state render any other assistance to homesteaders?

D. Sale of land by present owners to tenants. Can mortgages covering such sale on long time and at low interest rates be made discountable by present or new federal loan agencies?

E. What can we recommend on the purchase by the federal government of agricultural land for resale to tenants?

F. Should we recommend direct federal assistance to tenants desiring to be farm home owners? In the purchase of land, erection of buildings, purchase of live stock and "furnish," should the United States assistance come through state co-operatives or some other setup?

# POPULATION DOUBLED ON ARKANSAS FARMS

Commercial Appeal

## Tenane Survey Covers 36 Years—Hard Times

8-31-36

LITTLE ROCK, Aug. 30.—(AP)—Associate Economist H. W. Blalock of the University of Arkansas College of Agriculture said today that the number of tenants on farms in the state has nearly doubled since 1900.

Memphis, Tenn.

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# THREE PLANS DRAWN IN TENANCY PROBLEM AT PLANNING SESSION

Commercial Appeal

## Program Committee of Arkansas Commission Adopts Main Proposals

10-21-36

## GOVERNMENT AID ASKED

Memphis

### Federal Land Sale Part of Major Report

## SUGGEST LIBERAL LOANS

### Broader Regulations Would Make Tenant Eligible for Assistance—Probe of "Unlawful Acts" To Be Asked

BY DICK BREESE

Staff Correspondent of The Commercial Appeal

LITTLE ROCK, Oct. 20.—Three main proposals for improving the lot of tenants and sharecroppers were adopted today by the program committee of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission at an all day session.

The program will be submitted to the entire commission at Hot Springs Nov. 5, to be followed in a short time by a conference of governors, or representatives of all southern states, on the same problem.

Today's conference began with appointment by Chairman C. E. Palmer, Texarkana, of five subcommittees. In one of these, legislative, the commission recognized alleged terrorism of sharecroppers in Eastern Arkansas by empowering it to ask for a legislative investigation into "unlawful acts."

The other subcommittees were those on farm home ownership, arbitration, education and health, and subsistence and credit.

**Provides Land Purchase**

The first report adopted, that of the farm ownership group, proposed that "suitable farmlands be made available by the United States for purchase by tenant or non-owner farmers upon terms which may be met by any reasonably good and

industrious farmer from the produce of the farm."

The second, that of the arbitration group, recommended that "disputed accounts between landlord and tenant be submitted to arbitration at the request of either party, each naming an arbitrator and the arbitrators to name an umpire in case of disagreement, the award to be binding if not appealed to a court of competent jurisdiction within 10 days and no appeal to be barred because of inability of the tenant to pay court costs, the costs to be postponed until the final decree. The board of arbitration to have the right to examine books of either party."

The subsistence loans and credit committee report adopted urged that the regulations, policies and technique of the Farm Credit Administration and its branches, the Production Credit Corporation, emergency crop loans, resettlement loans, be liberalized to extend subsistence credit to tenant farmers and sharecroppers.

The report of the committee on education and health was deferred to gather more data.

**Will Draft Bill**

C. T. Coleman, Little Rock lawyer and planter; Governor Futrell, ex officio chairman of the committee, who attended today's session; C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree lawyer, and Joe Mahoney, El Dorado lawyer, were named to draft a bill embodying the arbitration plan.

All the sub-committees agreed to assemble more data from state and government officials and other sources for report to the entire committee at Hot Springs.

In empowering the legislative committee to draft a bill for a probe of the eastern Arkansas disorders, the resolutions said:

"The next Legislature should make an impartial investigation of alleged unlawful acts and interested parties should have legel representation."

The legislative committee, of which Mr. Coleman is chairman, will also draw up a declaration of principles of the farm tenancy committee.

**Reject "Relief" Plan**

In discussing the farm home ownership question, Governor Futrell suggested that the report include the words "That lands be supplied at no financial loss to federal and state governments." But the suggestion was not accepted.

"We should give nothing but a good opportunity—this is not a relief measure," he said.

While the farm home ownership plan is similar to the Bankhead-Jones Act program, the commission voted to exclude mention of the act to avoid controversy. Senator Bankhead, however, was commended for his work on behalf of farm home ownership, and he will be invited to attend the governors' conference.

On the arbitration question the governor also suggested that the state labor or welfare committees be empowered to provide legal aid in meritorious cases, and that suggestion was accepted.

During the discussion of subsistence credit, Dr. C. O. Brannen, research director at the University of Arkansas, pointed out that "the only resource of a sharecropper is his word and his crop. They need a supplementary system of credit besides the commissary—it is a federal, not a state problem. The government, through some established agency, should take steps to provide credit on condition that the tenant go as far as possible in providing for his own needs."

**Urges "Live At Home"**

Governor Futrell added that "I would like to see every farmer produce enough feed and food for his own needs, and thus cut down the need for credit. He should raise vegetables for use during the summer and for canning to carry him through the winter."

"And he should have chickens, cows, pigs," added Mr. Palmer.

The governor asked Dr. Brannen "if the landowner has any moral right to charge his tenants any more at his commissary than he would a cash customer."

Not answering directly, Dr. Brannen cited figures from an investigation of 1,500 farms in East Arkansas and the Mississippi delta from 1919 to 1921.

"The tenants then were charged an average of 36 per cent above the wholesale cost for food, feed and fertilizer. That included the carrying charge on the account. The landowner only collected about 18 per cent for his gross margin."

The only tenant farmer on the commission, J. H. Chambers of Monette, stated that "I have heard no complaints about accounts in the past few years—people are paying their bills. Up our way we borrow from the bank for our own subsistence."

**Explains RA System**

T. Roy Reid, RA regional director, explained why the sharecropper could not obtain federal loans at present.

"The Production Credit Corporation lends only to farmers through their credit associations, the loans only be for large amounts and heavily secured. Emergency crop loans are based on crop collateral, they are made for feed, seed and fertilizer and the borrower must have a team. Resettlement loans are made only to farmers on relief—for work stock, tools, livestock and subsistence. But lack of funds would be the main drawback for enlarging any of these to include credit to tenants and sharecroppers."

Governor Futrell today answered Governor-elect Carl E. Baley's statement that he (Bailey) would take the sharecropper problems up with federal authorities, and that "the farm tenancy committee appointed by Futrell had no legal standing."

The governor replied that the Civil Service Committee appointed by Bailey, the state planning board, the state forestry commission, all began as honorary bodies, but that all had saved the state millions of dollars.

And Mr. Palmer said that "Mr. Bailey is in sympathy with our objectives, and will work with us."

**Sub-Committee Named**

The objectives he described as "improving the condition of tenants and sharecroppers, promoting farm ownership."

He pointed out that Ireland, with government aid, had reduced its tenancy from 97 per cent to three per cent in 40 years.

His committee is composed of 50 prominent Arkansas farmers, business and professional men.

The sub-committees named this morning by Chairman Palmer are as follows:

Legislative—C. T. Coleman, Little Rock lawyer, chairman; Dr. A. C. Millar of Little Rock, publisher of the Arkansas Methodist; Mrs. Winifred C. Pope of Little Rock, business manager of the Arkansas Farmer; Mrs. Scott Wood of Hot Springs, former state P.-T. A. president, and C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree attorney.

Farm Home Ownership — Mr. Coleman, chairman; V. C. Kays, Jonesboro, president of A. & M. College; T. Roy Reid, regional director, Resettlement Administration; Dr. C. O. Brannan, University of Arkansas Sociologist and Research director; Governor Futrell.

Arbitration Between Tenants and Owners—Mr. Carpenter, chairman; Floyd Sharp, WPA director; J. B. Watson, president, Arkansas Negro A. & M., Pine Bluff; J. H. Chambers, Monette, tenant farmer.

Education and Health — Mr. Sharp, chairman; Miss Connie Bonslagle, of the Resettlement Administration; R. B. Smith, vocational department, state board of education; Prof. Watson, Dan T. Gray, of the RA, and dean of the University of Tennessee School of Agriculture; Dr. Brannan, Mrs. Pope.

Subsistence and Credit — Dr. Brannan, chairman; Dean Gray, ... Reid, Prof. Kays, Charles Gos... secretary of the committee, and ... Springs editor.

# The Vision of the Poor White

Idabel is a little city down in Southeastern Oklahoma where the Sooner Trail joins with Arkansas and Texas. It's the land of the poor white and the sharecropper. Many interesting experiences can be had and observations made in this Red River country which show that poor whites, in a large measure, remain poor because of prejudice they have for their black brother.

Black Dispatch

Take, for example, a caravan of poor whites who drove into Idabel recently from Foreman, Arkansas. The cause of their being on the move is significant. When a prominent Negro doctor asked one the other day why he came over into Oklahoma from the Arkansas section, this destitute poor man said that poor whites could not stay down on the big rich farms around Foreman because the white landlords would rather rent their farms to Negroes than to them.

11-28-36

When asked for a reason for such strange proceedure the poor bedeviled transient white sharecropper replied:

"We white men, if we live on those farms, demand an accounting for our labor and our crops. The white landlords down there know that a Negro can be intimidated and driven out and away from all of his labor, if the landlord so desires. Negroes do not have any rights down there so they are prefered as laborers and sharecroppers rather than white men. They are not allowed to 'figger' with white folk."

Oklahoma City, Okla.

This poor, ignorant white did not seem to get the picture as it actually is. He did not seem to sense the fact that the destruction of the Negroes' rights and privileges has also destroyed his. The fact that the Negro could not get an accounting for his toil and effort brought about a condition by which the white man could not work at all.

This poor white must yet learn that the only way for him to be able to farm the rich land down in the territory around Foreman, Arkansas, is by seeing to it that Negroes have the equality of opportunity that he has. The theoretical right of poor whites to figure is completely confiscated when there is nothing to figure.

Which individual is in the worst fix in Arkansas? The Negro can work but can't figure. The white man can figure but can't work.

Wise was that old sage Booker T. Washington, when he said, "No man can hold another man in the ditch without finally getting down in the ditch himself."

Arkansas.

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

# GRADUATE OF TUSKEGEE LOOKS AT SHARECROPPIN'

BY C. C. BRANDEN, SR.

Director General of Interdenominational Missions of Augusta, Ark.

THE masses of Israel, at one time, lost respect for reason, and we find Isaiah addressing them: "Come now, let us reason together."

The prophet felt that if he could get his people to spare time for sober reasoning, their afflictions would be healed thereby. I have that same thought when the troubles in East Arkansas, between landowners and sharecropping tenants come up. The occasion for sober inquiry and faithful listening is seldomly more pronounced than now. So, let's reason over the things highly calculated to mislead thousands of our innocent farm-life citizens.

A recent Associated Press report carried the statements: "The share-cropping system is wrong, rotten from top to bottom, and there is only one remedy—quit share-cropping." And: "This system is the product of our Reconstruction Period, where it worked well but now it is outworn and should be discarded."

The worthy character who made these remarks recognized that the landowners and their tenants were highly wrought up about share-cropping matters. He knew the farmers, generally, were bankrupt, and that the tenant situation was equally as bad, or even worse. So, therefore, as a remedy for the whole malady, he suggested that the south quit share-cropping, and discard the outworn system. Leave nothing, probably is his thought, for the men to quarrel about, and so that all should have peace.

This reveals a fancy, in the mind of a worthy citizen, that is born of the deepest misunderstanding. The problem is not that simple. It cannot be solved through discarding the system. People generally do not seem to know the proper place and purpose of the share-cropping system.

At the end of the Civil War, unnumbered thousands of ex-slaves were left wholly unemployed. And practically all of these were densely ignorant, without the simplest means of livelihood; and, worst of all, they were lacking in initiative and disposition to make their support without personal supervision. With these definite conditions facing them, the owners of the ex-slaves formulated the system that has worked up to this day, greatly to the advantage of both the share-cropper tenants and the farm owners.

These three considerations, together with the farmers' surplus land, gave birth to the present share-cropping system. And these very same considerations exist largely today, hence the system must continue indefinitely. In this system we have yet millions of faithful souls, qualified only for their making the elementary contributions to the nation's economic welfare. How, otherwise, could these humble citizens provide for themselves, if we discard the share-cropping system? Through good-will, and better understanding, we should seek to improve all phases of the system, but the institution itself must stand.

From the foregoing analysis one may observe clearly the factors that make up the character of citizens who fit best into the working plans of the share-cropping system. It is important that we, especially tenants, do not overlook these distinct factors, or the conditions that called the system into life.

All farm citizens should know, as well as we should know our multiplication tables, the type of persons best qualified for share-cropping services. When the proper type of tenants—those qualified only to make elementary contributions to their economic welfare—fills the share-croppers' place on the farm, the operation is peaceful. And, according to the original purposes, the results are usually profitable to all concerned.

But, if any other pattern drops in, or if a once ideal share-cropper makes, as he should, changes in his distinct type factors, through individual improvement, and thereafter lingers too long in the system, as one should not do, the farm has trouble. Or, in other words, if either the farm owners or the tenants behave so as to render the institution other than a mutual arrangement, for the mutual welfare of both, then the system gets its initial start towards troubles.

Our great masses are yet too largely uneducated, and too largely without the necessary means for independent farming, to discard share-cropping. And, if we should take our East Arkansas wrangling as an index, we might well feel that many, even this late, do not possess the intelligence to make their support without personal supervision. Let us reason in terms of our homes. I feel that no parents would pay or would organize to keep their big, ambitious sons in the kindergarten class. They would think, however, that faithful citizens should organize, and should pay money to raise their standards of life, that they should buy land, make modern farms and educate. But no true-hearted, thoughtful man will create a community disturbance, fuss and fight, to claim a kindergarten chair.

Most farm owners encourage their industrious tenants to buy land, and to do independent farming. My letter is long, but let me mention a few examples, at random. At Augusta, Ark., we have Henry Spearman, who for a number of years was a share-cropper. He now owns his home, and is general supervisor on the Conner plantation three miles east. Spearman makes an independent living, and is able to advance his church association financial help, any day in the year. Down at Gregory, we have John Bledsoe. Farmer Bledsoe proved an exceptional share-cropper for a long period, on the R. T. Harvill plantation, but now he is master of his own household. He owns a splendid farm and home, where you see, almost invariably, all the things a first-rate farmer is supposed to have. Bledsoe makes an independent living, but Mr. Harvill, his former landlord, still holds out to him an ever-helping hand.

Over at Proctor, Ark., we have A. B. Owens. Many years ago this prosperous farmer was a share-cropper, but later on he came to be manager of the Scott plantation and cotton gin, down in Tunica County, Miss. Some 20-odd years ago Farmer Owens moved across the Great Father of Waters, settling in Crittenden County. Here he owns and operates a modern farm of several hundred acres of delta land. Nothing in the history of the negro's matchless advancement is more truly the background than is share-cropping, and nothing has been more productive of genuine happiness for the masses than farm life.

# Croppers Fight Terror Reign With Strike

Daily Worker

## Eastern Arkansas Cotton Growers Expect Call to Drop Tools

3-24-36

New York

**By Rex Pitkin**

(Special to the Daily Worker)

MEMPHIS, Tenn., March 23.—The sharecroppers of Eastern Arkansas have decided to answer the evictions and terror which have plagued them ceaselessly for more than two months.

An organized campaign to destroy the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, the one organization that expresses their just demands for life, will be resisted by the one weapon that remains—strike.

Appeal after appeal to local, state and National relief officials have met no response. Beginning on Jan. 18 and continuing until the present union sharecroppers by the hundred have been evicted from their shacks. The evictions have been accompanied by a reign of terror which Gov. Futrell labeled, "Much ado about very little."

**Lynch Threats**

The governor's whitewash included lynch threats, the shooting of innocent union members, the murder of a witness for a cropper who was railroaded to jail for seven years and an attempt to dynamite a tent colony of evicted tenants at Parkin, Ark.

The croppers' mandate to their national executive council was overwhelming. They voted 6,118 for a strike and only 384 opposed. A strike committee has been set up and the call to drop tools and leave the cotton fields is expected soon.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the S. T. F. U., says that "the union will strike at the time when the cotton is coming up and is in danger of grass and weeds taking it. We intend to stop every plow and every hoe in the cotton fields, and if we can hold out for one week the planters will have to give in or face the loss of their crops."

**Families Homeless**

With literally hundreds of families homeless the union has been compelled to set up four camps on U. S. Highway 64 which cares for fifty families in addition to the tent colony quartering 105 Negroes at Parkin, Ark. "There are hundreds of other families," the union announces, "who are in like plight scattered over the countryside."

Even those families in the camps are without shelter or food. The union has but little means of extending relief to the homeless. Attempts to put the evicted croppers on the relief rolls have failed. The governmental machinery in cotton country is controlled by planters.

Countless stories of terror are told by the croppers as they come to the union headquarters here. The latest instance is the brutal murder of Willie Hurst, union member, who was shot down in cold blood at the home of his friend, Amos Williams, Earle, Arkansas.

**Testified for Ball**

Hurst was killed because he testified in behalf of Jim Ball who was framed and sent to jail for seven years because he attempted to protect women and children at a union meeting which was broken up by armed vigilantes. The meeting was held in a church to protest the eviction of 105 Negroes from the C. H. Dibble plantation in Earle. The church was invaded and its furnishings destroyed.

The murder was committed before the eyes of Williams and his wife. Circumstantial evidence points to a local "peace" officer who participated in the recent attacks on union meetings. No inquest was held after the murder.

Funds to carry on the strike are needed immediately and should be sent to H. L. Mitchell, box 5215, Memphis, Tenn. Protests should be sent to the following relief officials in Washington: Harry Hopkins, Aubrey Williams and Rexford Tugwell.

# Governor Futrell Moves To Solve Tenant, Sharecropper Problem

## *Chief Executives of Cotton Growing States Pledge Co-operation as Southwide Conference Is Called To Study Question.*

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Aug. 15.—(AP)—Governors of cotton-growing states pledged co-operation today in a movement launched by Governor J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas, to solve the south's 70-year-old farm tenant and share-cropper problems.

As an initial step, Futrell called a south-wide conference to conduct an impartial study of the tenancy question which has been a source of discord in the cotton country since reconstruction days.

The executive, who announced his intention to retire to private life at the end of his term in January, indicated a desire to devote the last months of his governorship to this work.

He already has moved to name an Arkansas commission, to form a nucleus for the proposed south-wide group. Hot Springs, Ark., far removed from the troubled east Arkansas share-cropper belt, was proposed for the meeting place.

**Solution Seen.**

Futrell said he felt a solution could be worked out through co-operation of federal and state agencies, indicating he believed a program for assisting tenant farmers in purchasing their own farms through long-term financing offered the brightest hope for what he described as an "underprivileged class."

Governor James V. Allred, of Texas, was one of the first to pledge co-operation.

"The Governor of Arkansas has a very worthy objective," said Allred. "I am in complete sympathy with any concerted move to change farm tenants into farm owners."

At Columbia, S. C., Governor Olin D. Johnston, the son of a tenant farmer, said:

"My father was a tenant farmer and I worked as a boy on a tenant farm, so naturally I would be interested in anything that will aid the farmers, especially the tenant farmers, of the state and nation."

**Stop Propaganda.**

Commissioner of Agriculture J. C. Holton, of Mississippi, said "It might be a good idea for the friends of the south to get together and work out some plan for stopping all this propaganda about share-croppers that is designed to hurt the south."

"It never hurts to discuss a situation," said Governor Richard Leche, of Louisiana.

Although they said their tenant problems were not as pressing, Governor George Peery, of Virginia; Governor E. W. Marland, of Oklahoma, and Governor Hill McAllister, of Tennessee, expressed similar opinion.

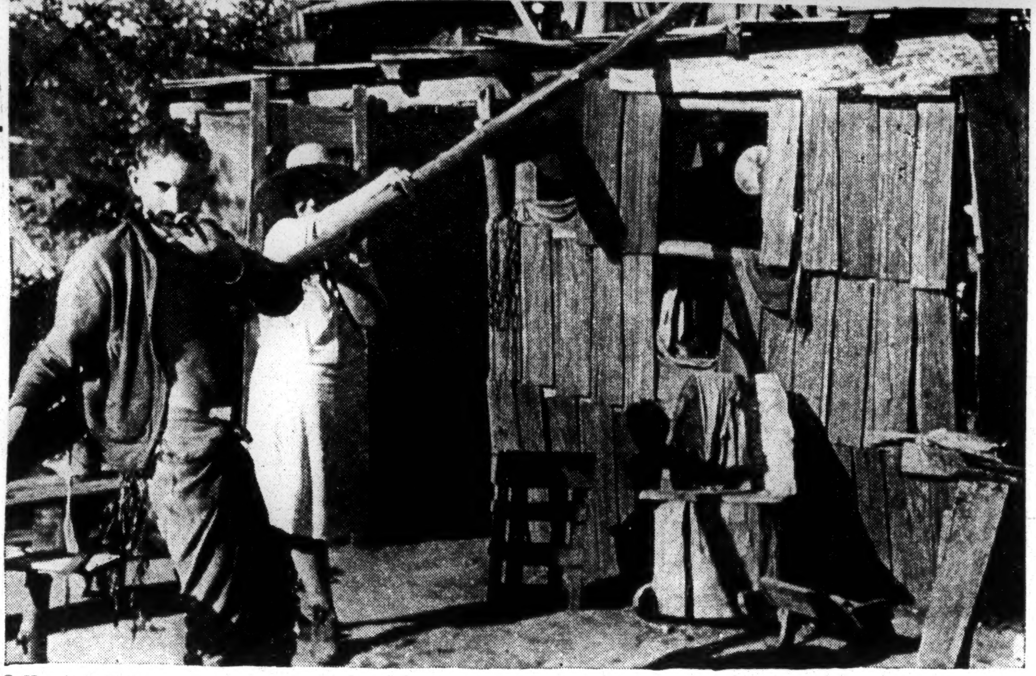
Attorney General Cummings said in Washington this week that a federal grand jury in Little Rock would be asked to investigate charges of peonage in Arkansas cotton fields. Brien McMahon, assistant attorney general, expressed interest today in the south-wide conference proposed by Futrell, but said it would have no effect upon the government's proposed investigation.

encounter between the forces of the two nations:

Armed Spanish government troops crossed the border late last night in an effort to recapture two buses loaded with bombs which they declared had been seized by Portuguese customs guards.

Portuguese border troops, attempting to block the Spanish incursion, fired at the government militiamen. The rain of bullets drove the Spaniards back.

Coming on the heels of a Portuguese protest to the socialist Madrid government against previous alleged invasion of Portuguese territory, the advance across the border was declared to have been the third frontier incident in 24 hours.



© Harris & Ewing

A dreary picture, typical of scenes in area under government investigation

# TENANT FARMERS: Dual Inquiries Provoked by New Storm in Share-Cropper Area

Where is Frank Weems? Does he lie dead in an unmarked grave or at the bottom of a river in Arkansas? Has he fled in fright? Is he being deliberately detained to keep him away from the share-cropper storm center?

As State and Federal Governments moved last week to allay the storm, they found the Weems mystery injected again into the broader question they were striving to answer: How can the distressing seventy-year-old farm tenancy situation in the South best be resolved?

Weems, a forty-year-old Negro tenant farmer, attended a Southern Tenant Farmers' Union strike demonstration at Earle, Arkansas, in May. Vigilantes broke up the meeting and dumped Weems, badly beaten, on a grocery-store floor. The next morning he was not there. He has not been seen since.

A few days later, Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis social worker, and the Rev. Claude Williams of Little Rock, on their way to funeral services for the missing Weems, were flogged near Earle.

Sheriff Howard Curlin of Crittendon County accused them of trying to whip up emotion by a mock funeral for a man who had not died.

**Federal Action**—The Department of Justice began an investigation, not of the floggings, which are a State matter, but of the conditions underlying them. After several weeks on the scene, Investigator Samuel E. Whittaker of Chattanooga reported to Washington, but what he learned was not revealed.

Instead, last week the Department of Justice announced that it would present to a Federal Grand Jury, after it convenes at Little Rock on September 21, "conflicting evidence" concerning violation of peonage laws.

Two years after the War Between the States, Congress, to implement the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery, passed a law forever forbidding the system known as peonage, later defined by the Supreme Court as "compulsory servitude based on indebtedness."

The American Civil Liberties Union and other liberal agencies which have turned their attention to the plight of the share-cropper insist that the method employed by many Southern cotton planters is, in many cases, peonage.

**Farmers' Plight**—Tenant farmers pay no cash to occupy the land they farm. They supply labor in exchange for tools, housing, food and, at the end of the cotton season, half the value of the crop. By the time drainage and fencing and credit accumulated at the plantation store are deducted, there is often no cash left for them.

Plantation owners point out that when the crop is good enough to bring in enough cash to divide, it is divided. In their defense, they point out that they carry the entire responsibility of ownership, operation—and loss.

While George P. Jones, dapper assistant to the Attorney General, prepared to observe his sixtieth birthday by taking the matter before the Little Rock Grand Jury, Gov. J. Marion Futrell of Arkansas, himself born and reared on a farm, called a conference of Governors of cotton-growing States at Hot Springs to talk over the share-cropper situation.

**Governors' Views**—Southern State officials responded readily. Gov. James V. Allred of Texas praised the "very worthy objective" and pledged "complete sympathy." Gov. Olin D. Johnston of South Carolina was "interested in anything that will aid the farmers." Commissioner of Agriculture J. C. Holton of Mississippi thought it was a good idea to get together to "stop all this propaganda." The Governors of Virginia, Oklahoma and Tennessee agreed with Governor Leche of Louisiana that "it never hurts to discuss a situation."

Roger N. Baldwin, President of the Civil Liberties Union, found it "heartening to see a southern Governor making a move to tackle the evils of the plantation system," but other share-cropper sympathizers were skeptical.

Norman Thomas, Socialist Candidate for President, who has for many months demanded Federal prosecution of plantation owners, doubts the good faith of the conference. First let the State produce Frank Weems, end flogging and protect the share-croppers' right to organize, he argues.

**Editorial Comment**—One of the few Southern papers to break the silence, *The Arkansas Gazette*, in Little Rock, calmly counseled:

"The first thing to do with the many-sided problem of landless rural families is to reduce the facts to understandable form. No measures are going to make all the millions of tenants and share-croppers independent and successful farmers on their own resources.

"But all who are capable should have their chance. Nor should others be abandoned to themselves. Ways and means should be sought to improve their situation for their own good and for the good of the whole cotton country."

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission.

# PRESIDENT OF COLORED ARKANSAS COLLEGE HAS GOOD WORD FOR GANG WHICH TERRORIZED SHARECROPPERS

Globe 12-4-36
Nashville, Tenn.

## Dr. J. B. Watson Says His State Is "Least Offender" Among Oppressors Of Southern Tenants

Hot Springs, Ark., Dec. 3—(ANP) A sharp debate followed the presentation of two resolutions at Monday's meeting of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission probing lawlessness and intimidation in the sharecropper situation throughout the state. The resolutions, one conflicting with the other, were given to a sub-committee with instructions to draft another set for submission to the body. A federal grand jury was recently empanelled to investigate the situation.

The bone of contention at Monday's meeting was the subject of law violations. Dr. A. C. Millar of Little Rock, editor of the Arkansas Methodist, wanted a report adopted saying that the commission realized that conditions were not what they should be and recommending that the Governor use his authority to prosecute such cases.

**Wants Charges Whitewashed**

Attorney C. T. Coleman of Little Rock, chairman of the subcommittee wanted a minority report which made no reference to the East Arkansas situation but wanted a commission created by the legislature "to investigate the status of tenancy in this state and report the exact facts and circumstances relating to it."

Dr. Millar's resolution also wanted the next legislature to appoint some body to "Investigate the conditions in the communities where the alleged lawlessness has occurred so that the facts may be known and the legal authorities may be enabled to protect the weak and punish the lawlessness by whomever committed."

**Both Sides Enter Debate**

The debate evoked caustic comment by the supporters of the resolutions and among those who aired their views were Gov. Futrell of Arkansas; J. R. Butler, president of the Southern Farm Tenant Union; Commission Chairman C. E. Palmer; Dr. J. B. Watson, colored president Pine Bluff A. and M. College; C. T. Carpenter, lawyer of Marked Tree; T. Roy Reed, regional Resettlement director; J. E. Beck, a planter, and W. G. Padgett, a sharecropper.

President Watson of the Pine Bluff college said: "Arkansas is the least offender in this sharecropper business of all the Southern States. There is not another Southern state in which this tenant union could have been organized and they know it."

# TENANCY PROGRAM SENT GOVERNORS

## Early Land Purchase Plan Seen As Successful Curb Against Radicals

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., Dec. 12.—(AP)—In a summary of conclusions reached after many weeks of study, the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission today recommended that "a new homestead policy" be established in the United States to give sharecroppers the opportunities of farm-home ownership.

Copies of the report were sent to all members of President Roosevelt's new national committee on farm tenancy which will hold its initial meet in Washington next week, and to the governors of states having a high percentage of tenancy.

Paying tribute to the more than 50 members of the state commission which Gov. J. M. Futrell named last Summer to work out a program for state and national action, Chairman C. E. Palmer, south Arkansas publisher, termed the summary of findings "sane, comprehensive, feasible."

"This program translated into prompt action by the Federal Government and the states, will end all dangers from socialist and communist activities in rural sections," said the chairman.

Cornerstone of the report was the recommendation that the Federal and state governments collaborate in making available for purchase by tenants lands sufficiently productive to permit the purchaser to pay for them, from his produce, over a long term, at low interest rates.

The commission proposed that lands used in such "a homestead policy," be dedicated for all time as homesteads, subject to no encumbrance except as the Federal Government might specify.

Supervised credit for farm supplies, supervision to prevent soil depletion, and legislation to prevent corporations from purchasing lands for farm purposes were suggested as necessary complements of the program. It was proposed that the state and its political subdivisions make available for the plan lands which have been or may be forfeited for non-payment of taxes.

In addition, the commission proposed a broad accompanying program for improvement of health and educational facilities in tenant areas, for a standard contract between landlords and tenants to serve as a prerequisite for all Federal benefits, and legislation to insure prompt settlement of disputed accounts between landlords and tenants.

"With present birth rates, America will not be a great nation by the end of the century unless she preserves a healthy rural life," said the report. "With no influx of people from the country New York City would shrink in a hundred years to a third its present size. The cities can no longer keep themselves alive; they must be steadily replenished by the country. This need not be harmful, providing we see to it that the country people are strong, free and well-nurtured."

# HOMESTEAD PROGRAM SOUGHT FOR TENANTS IN ARKANSAS REPORT

Commercial Appeal

## Futrell's Committee Suggests Government Aid to Promote Ownership

12-13-36

## LAND WOULD BE SET ASIDE

Memphis, Tenn.

### Proposal Dedicates Farms to Permanent Policy

# PALMER LAUDS SURVEY

## Commission Chairman Declares Plan Would Eliminate Dangers From Radical Elements in Rural Areas

By The Associated Press

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**Aims at Communists**

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**Agreements Sought**

In addition, the commission proposed an accompanying program for improvement of health and educational facilities in tenant areas, for a standard contract between landlords and tenants to serve as a prerequisite for federal benefits, and legislation to insure prompt settlement of accounts disputed between landlords and tenants.

"Arkansas should be proud of the work of the Futrell commission, whose labors have resulted in a sane, comprehensive and feasible program," said Chairman Palmer.

"With the great interest in this subject already evinced by Governor-elect Carl Bailey, and his appointment to President Roosevelt's National Farm Tenancy Commission, it may well be anticipated that Arkansas will be in the forefront of states endeavoring to correct tenancy evils, insofar as it can be done through state action, and cooperating with such plans as may be recommended by the National Farm Tenancy Commission and enacted into law at the next session of Congress.

**Foresees Broad Prosperity**

"If correlative action is taken by Congress and the states to promote urban home ownership and assure equitable relations between employers and employes, democratic ideals and institutions of America will be preserved and the United States enter upon such a period of peace, prosperity and social security as has never before been achieved by any nation."

Palmer said the recent action of former Governor Frank O. Lowden of Illinois in turning his Gould, Ark., plantation over to negro colonists, on an easy terms basis, "points the way to how private landowners may co-operate in launching this movement."

In addition to the homestead policy, the Arkansas commission recommended:

Revision of the government's subsistence credit system to reach farmers not able to obtain credit from the established agencies, but who are willing to operate on a budget basis.

**Education Facilities Urged**

Federal and state provisions for adult education.

Adequate school buildings in reach of the children of all tenants, through use of WPA funds where necessary.

Strict compulsory attendance law.

Health clubs in the schools.

Immediate functioning of the free textbook amendment.

A state equalization fund that would provide trained teachers in communities unable to pay minimum requirements.

A national equalization fund for elementary education.

Vocational education.

Small public libraries in tenant areas.

A health program co-ordinated

with the schools and with currently functioning state and federal agencies which would provide:

**Health Benefits Included**

Eradication of malaria and other preventable diseases.

Establishment of a state hospital in connection with the University of Arkansas medical school.

County health clinics and hoshospitalization with district doctors, dentists, nurses.

Destruction of barrow pits along highways and railroads.

A state group, which previously recommended investigation of tenancy by the next Legislature, asked also that the Legislature investigate commissaries and the use of token money, that the Legislature consider the use of the present voluntary debt adjustment committees in the arbitration of disputes between landlords and tenants, and that the Legislature "consider the enactment of such laws as will discourage the ownership of farm lands in large tracts necessitating cultivation through tenancy of day labor."

Agriculture - 1936
Condition of.

Committee to Study Tenancy.

# THREE RACE MEN ON BOARD NAMED BY NATION'S CHIEF

Courier 11-28-36
Pittsburgh, Pa.

**WASHINGTON, Nov. 25—(ANP)—Three Negro leaders and a number of liberal whites were appointed last week by President Roosevelt to a special committee of 38 to study means of curing the ills of farm tenancy, a campaign** pledge made by the nation's chief executive.

This committee, a non-partisan group of leading men and women is headed by Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and must report by February 1. Working with them will be Senator John H. Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas, who in the last session of Congress proposed a bill intending to create a billion dollar corporation to make independent farm owners out of tenants and sharecroppers.

This group is charged specifically with reporting ways and means of "developing a land tenure system which will bring an increased measure of security, opportunity and well-being to farm tenants."

The Bankhead-Jones bill met with too many objections for passage. Opponents declared it would saddle the tenants with a long-term debt. The Bankhead-Jones plan was for the government to buy land and re-sell it to tenants under a long-term agreements ranging up to 40 years. This was called "inconsistent" with other Federal plans as, under the AAA, the government was paying farmers to reduce their crops and it would be uneconomic to at the same time buy farms and equipment for resale. AAA benefits have also been going mainly to the landlords and little to the tenants, some senators said.

Colored members of the committee are Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, president of Bethune-Cookman College and NYA official; Charles S. Johnson, professor of sociology at Fisk University and a co-author of the recent book, "The Collapse of Farm Tenancy in the South," and Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute.

White members who have worked with or among Negroes include Dr. W. W. Alexander, executive director of the Commission on Interracial Co-operation and until recently president of Dillard University, New Orleans; Edwin R. Embree, president of the Julius Rosenwald Foundation and an author of the study of farm tenancy along with oJhnson; A. R. Mason, provost, Cornell University, who has handled many graduate students in agriculture; Mrs. A. B. Newell, of the Women's Missionary Council of the M. E. Church, South, which handles funds for Negro education; Howard W. Odum, sociologist of the University of North Carolina, who has made many significant studies of the race, and Edward A. O'Neal, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, who brought colored delegates to this year's convention in Chicago.

## Roosevelt Names Members of Race For Farm Study

WASHINGTON, Nov. 27—A few hours after announcement by Rexford G. Tugwell, head of the Resettlement Administration, of a program to transform tenant farmers into small landowners, it was reported that President Roosevelt had accepted the resignation of the Resettlement head.

The President has appointed several prominent Race members to serve on a special committee charged with the task of studying and reporting by February 1 "a long-term program of action to alleviate the shortcomings of the farm tenancy system." The appointees include F. D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute; Charles S. Johnson, professor of sociology at Fisk university, and Mary McLeod Bethune, president of the Bethune Cookman college, Daytona, Fla. The committee is under the general auspices of the National Resources committee.

"The rapid increase in tenant farmers during the past half century," the President said, "is significant evidence that we have fallen short of achieving the traditional American ideal of owner-operate farms."

## FDR Selects Committee To Study Tenancy

Journal and Guide
11-28-36
Norfolk, Va.

### Members of Both Races Chosen To Special Survey Group

WASHINGTON (ANP) —Three Negro leaders and a number of liberal whites were appointed last week by President Roosevelt to a special committee of 38 to study means of curing the ills of farm tenancy, a campaign pledge made by the nation's chief executive.

This committee, a non-partisan group of leading men and women, is headed by Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and must report by Feb. 1. Working with them will be Senator John H. Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas, who in the last session of congress proposed a bill intending to create a billion dollar corporation to make independent farm owners out of tenants and sharecroppers.

**TO DEVISE PLAN**

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**DR. BETHUNE NAMED**

Colored members of the committee are Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, president of Bethune-Cookman college and NYA official; Charles S. Johnson, professor of sociology at Fisk university and a co-author of the recent book, "The Collapse of Farm Tenancy in the South" and Dr. Frederick D. Patterson, president of Tuskegee Institute.

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## ON FARM TENANCY COMMISSION

DR. F. D. PATTERSON

MRS. MARY McLEOD BETHUNE

DR. CHARLES S. JOHNSON

nell university, who has handled many graduate students in agriculture; Mrs. A. B. Newell, of the Women's Missionary council of the M. E. Church, South, which handles funds for Negro education; Howard W. Odum, sociologist of the University of North Carolina, who has made many significant studies of the race, and Edward A. O'Neil, president of the American Farm Bureau federation, who brought colored delegates to this year's convention in Chicago.

## COOPERATIVES URGED FOR FARM TENANTS BY NAACP

NEW YORK—A suggestion that the new committee appointed by President Roosevelt to study the problem of farm tenancy give study to the establishment of co-operatives was made in a letter to Secretary Henry A. Wallace by the NAACP today.

The NAACP also urged safeguards against the selling of sub-marginal, unproductive land to Negro and white tenant farmers in the South who might seek to become owners under the proposed government plan. The association's letter asked that the administrative board, which will have to be set up after the plan is adopted, contain a Negro member, since a great many of the farm tenants in the South are Negroes.

# REGIONAL TENANCY MEETINGS SLATED

Advertiser

## Revision Of Rental Contracts Among Subjects To Be Discussed

12-24-36

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.—(AP)—State action to improve present farm rental contracts headed a list of subjects announced by President Roosevelt's farm tenancy commission today for discussion at a series of regional public hearings.

Saying tenancy problems had assumed "serious proportions" in the cotton and corn belts and the great plain. Secretary Wallace called the hearings for early January. Montgomery, Ala.

He said they would permit tenants, and owners and all interested persons to help answer these questions:

1—What can states do to improve present rental contracts, through legislation or through education of land owners and tenants?

2—How should tenants be recompensed for improvements made on farms, or penalized for depletion of land?

3—What are the chief difficulties facing tenants who wish to become owners?

4—How can the Federal government help farms which may be leased to individuals?

5—What are the possibilities of co-operative farming by tenants?

6—What interest rates and amortization plans should be applied to government loans to tenant farmers or co-operatives?

7—What type of education is needed to help tenants become successful owner-operators?

8—Can the present policies of the government in regard to farm credit, AAA benefits, etc., be shaped to favor farm ownership?

Wallace, chairman of the commission, which will report to President Roosevelt during the coming session of Congress has urged long-time leasing as a major solution of the tenant problem. He said it would encourage tenants to improve property and give them more security. Most farm rental contracts now are for short terms.

W. W. Alexander, acting head of the Resettlement Administration, and L. C. Gray, an assistant administrator and secretary of the President's committee, will conduct the regional hearings at Dallas, Texas, January 4 and Montgomery, Ala., Jan. 6.

L. L. Wilson, assistant secretary of agriculture and A. G. Black, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, will lead the hearings at Indianapolis, January 7, Lincoln, Neb. Jan. 9, and San Francisco Jan. 12.

## TENANCY HEARING HERE

Those who have been following the proposals for a Federal farm tenancy program are looking forward with interest to the hearings to be conducted here by the tenancy commission appointed by President Roosevelt.

January 6 is the date set for the hearings in Montgomery and students of the tenancy problem and other interested persons will be given an opportunity to present their opinions.

The chief questions to be discussed at the meeting here are:

1—What can States do to improve present rental contracts, through legislation or through education of land owners and tenants?

Advertiser

2—How should tenants be recompensed for improvements made on farms, or penalized for depletion of land?

3—What are the chief difficulties facing tenants who wish to become owners?

4—How can the Federal Government help farms which may be leased to individuals?

5—What are the possibilities of cooperative farming by tenants?

6—What interest rates and amortization plans should be applied to government loans to tenant farmers or cooperatives?

7—What type of education is needed to help tenants become successful owner-operators?

12/28/36

8—Can the present policies of the government in regard to farm credit, AAA benefits, etc., be shaped to favor farm ownership?

Montgomery, Ala.

The question concerning the role of State government in the drive to improve the economic and social welfare of our agricultural population is one that has not been discussed at length. If means can be found to enable State and county governments to coordinate their efforts with the Federal government, progress toward the ultimate objective can be accelerated greatly.

## TENANTS NEED AID

Reports of government officials, in addition to the President's conference committee's investigation of the economic conditions of farm tenants and croppers, make it increasingly probable that congress will be asked to provide adequate measures to extend New Deal benefits to this class of the nation's citizens.

Constitution 12-27-36 Atlanta, Ga.

Dr. T. J. Woofter Jr., reporting on a survey he made in Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas, emphasized his finding of "starvation wages and exorbitant interest rates" among southern tenants in 1934.

The average net income of plantation operators was reported at $2,572, whereas the average tenant family had a net income in 1934 of $304, including what it raised for its own use, and that it was charged an average of 37 per cent interest for credit to meet living expenses. Furthermore, Dr. Woofter says:

The houses furnished are among the poorest in the nation. Unpainted four-room shacks predominate. Screening is the exception rather than the rule and sanitation is primitive. The low income for large families provides only a meager existence. The keystone of any program of southern agrarian reconstruction must be a program of mass education. This situation points to the need of a federal program of grants-in-aid for the equalization of educational opportunity, justified by the fact that the surplus wealth of the southeast is concentrated in other sections, and the further fact that such a large proporion of youth educated in the rural area make their life contribution in industrial cities.

Dr. Woofter said the rapid increase in population in the rural south was a factor to be reckoned with in planning for better rural conditions. "You can't plow under every third child," he declared.

In making Dr. Woofter's report public, Harry L. Hopkins, works progress administrator, said that the majority of tenants who have been on relief were found capable of becoming self-supporting, and that a survey of relief and rehabilitation activities among cotton tenants "emphasized the importance of support by the federal government in the future reconstruction of the cotton belt."

Coincident with this report is another made by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics which reveals that "owner-operated farms outnumber tenant farms, and owner-operated farm acreage exceeds tenant-operated farms." The report also discloses that—

The general trend has been toward tenancy, with a lessening ratio of equity in farm real estate held by farm operators. In brief, farmers are gradually losing ownership in land. The proportion of farms operated by tenants has increased from 35 per cent in 1900, 37 per cent in 1910 and 38 per cent in 1920, to 42 per cent in 1930, with the exact figure unknown in 1936. The highest rate of tenancy exists on cotton farms, it being shown by the census of 1930 that 73 per cent of the cotton type of farms, as classified by the census, were tenant-operated. The rate of tenancy for other farms, on which diversified activities prevailed, was 32 per cent.

Salient points of these reports are that conditions are becoming worse, instead of better, and that the all-cotton agricultural program tends to increase tenancy, whereas diversification of farming activities tends to reduce tenancy and increase the number of owner-operators.

Education and better housing conditions are stressed, it being shown that the youth of agricultural districts gravitate to industrial centers, instead of staying on the farm, while those individuals of more than ordinary ability seek other sections of the country to achieve their aspirations.

It is shown that the majority of those who have been on relief, or who have been aided by operation of the resettlement plan, are capable of becoming self-sustaining, but as they are unable to "raise themselves by the bootstraps," they must have aid, which may be either federal or state.

Industry, trade and commerce have been helped on the road to permanent recovery by New Deal policies. Agriculture has been greatly aided; but as it is the fundamental base of all prosperity, it must receive still more aid, and that can take no better form than adequate measures which will assist thousands upon thousands of worthwhile tenants and croppers to become the owner-operators of small farms. Under competent supervision they will not only become independent, but assets to the communities in which they live, their state and the entire nation.

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# BROADER TENANCY ACT ADVOCATED BY BAILEY

## Farmers' Guidance Is Thought Necessary For Program

12-18-36

## ARKANSAS SEEKS SUPPORT

### Governor Says RA Loans Are Insufficient To Success Of Bankhead-Jones Bill—Union Promises Commission Aid

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17.—Governor-elect Carl E. Bailey of Arkansas, a member of President Roosevelt's Farm Tenancy Committee, said today he believed the Bankhead-Jones bill should be broadened to provide guidance for tenant farmers who want to improve their status.

**Agreement Sought**

Bailey said he hoped other members of the committee, in session here today, would agree with his viewpoint that the $50,000,000 annual appropriation proposed by the Bankhead-Jones Bill to help tenant farmers buy property would be accompanied by some means of supervision and guidance of farmers before and after they obtain RA loans and enter into land purchase contracts.

"Some farmers who should be helped by this legislation," Bailey said, "are not yet ready to take the responsibility of buying land. Others are prepared to take that responsibility. Both types should have guidance if the program is to be a success."

**State Laws Desirable**

Mr. Bailey said that state legislation was the most practical approach to the "farm lease" phase of the tenancy problem.

He suggested alterations of existing farm leasing laws to provide:

1. Compensation from tenant to landlord for any "unusual deteioration" of the property during the lease period, through fault of the tenant.

2. Compensation from landlord to tenant for "unusual improvements" made by the tenant during his occupancy.

3. In case a lease is terminated before its expiration date, the party to the contract, whether landlord or tenant, who had not received full value should receive compensation from the other.

Such legislation, he said, would benefit tenants, landlords and the land.

**Union Is Suggested**

W. L. Blackstone of Wynne, Ark., only tenant farmer on the committee, suggested unionization of tenant farmers, elimination of tenant agreements to buy from commissary stores, settlement of landlord-tenant disputes by arbitration boards, and limitation of interest rates on the farmers' indebtedness.

"Whole-hearted co-operation" from the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in any "experiments" suggested by the commission was promised today in a statement by union officials.

# 12 GOVERNORS BADE TO TENANCY PARLEY

Advertiser

## W. W. Alexander Expected To Be Present For Hearing Here Jan. 6

12-21-36 Montgomery, Ala.

R. W. Hudgens, Resettlement Administration director for Region Five, said yesterday plans were being completed for the public hearing by the President's special committee on Farm Tenancy, Jan. 6, at the Whitley Hotel. The purpose of the meeting, he said, was to give interested groups and individuals throughout the southeast an opportunity to express their views on long-term tenancy programs.

Among those expected to attend the gathering are Dr. W. W. Alexander, acting administrator of the Resettlement Administration, and Dr. L. C. Gray, executive secretary of the committee.

Invitations have been extended to Goveronrs of 12 States, and representatives of agricultural colleges, schools, agricultural departments, farmers' organizations, fram publications, and individuals.

The following topics are to be discussed:

"What can States do to improve present rental contracts? (A) Through legislation. (B) Through education of landowners and tenants? How should tenants be recompensed for improvements made on the farm, or penalized for depletion of land? What are the chief difficulties facing tenants who wish to become owners?

How can the Federal Government help tenants acquire farms? (A) By loans for purchase of farms. (B) By public acquisition of farms and lease to individuals. What are the possibilities of cooperative farming by tenants? What interest rates and amortization plans should be applied to government loans to tenant farmers or cooperatives? What type of education is needed to help tenants become successful owner-operators? Can the present policies of the Government in regard to farm credit, AAA benefits, etc., be shaped to favor farm ownership?"

Following the hearings here, the committee will go to Indianapolis, Jan. 7, Lincoln, Neb., Jan. 9, and San Francisco, Jan. 12.

# TENANT FARM UNION HELD THE WAY OUT

## 6-Point Program for Croppers, Tenants Is Made to Probers

12-2-36

WASHINGTON (FP).—Unionization of sharecroppers and tenant farmers as the first step in working out a solution of the farm tenancy problem was submitted to the President's committee on tenancy here by W. L. Blackstone, sole member of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union on the commission of 40 persons.

Discussion of the problem was continued into the second day by the commission after hearing Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace declared that if civilization in this country is to survive, more farmers must own the land they operate. Before the commission, as it continued discussion, was a survey of farm tenancy prepared by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

"The general trend," reports the Bureau, "has been toward tenancy, with a lessening ratio of equity in farm real estate held by farm operators. In brief, farmers are gradually losing ownership of the land."

**TENANTS INCREASE**

In 1900, the study showed, 35 per cent of the farms were operated by tenants. By 1910 the percentage had increased to 37 and today 42 per cent of the farms are operated by tenants. By 1910 the percentage had increased to 37 and today 42 per cent of the farms are operated by tenants. In 1935, 45 per cent of the farm land in the country was operated under lease.

In offering unionization of sharecroppers and tenants as the first step in the solution of the problem Blackstone declared that "this method enlists to best advantage the habits of generations of cotton field workers under the now dying plantation system, provides a responsible instrumentality with which the government, federal, state, and local agencies can cooperate, and affords an opportunity under indigenous leadership for self-education and promotion of the spirit of pulling together which is essential."

Other steps recommended are:

1—Honest and open contracts with landlords.

2—Abolition of the commissary stores owned by the plantation owners.

3—Disputes over contracts to be referred to county and state arbitration.

**LOANS, RATES**

4—Interest rates not to exceed those permitted by state laws.

5—Loans to tenants to be advanced directly by federal agencies and that all loans be made at low interest with waiver of landlord's lien.

6—Adequate relief for off seasons as a "matter of justice" and a method of spreading purchasing power.

Richmond, Va., Times-Dispatch
December 17, 1936

# Unions Held Cure For Tenancy Ills

## Variety of Reforms Laid Before Committee

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16—(AP)—A wide variety of reforms, all aimed at curing farm tenancy evils, was proposed today before President Roosevelt's tenancy committee.

Secretary Wallace, chairman of the committee of 40 persons, suggested land speculation be curbed and landlord-tenant agreements improved to put part of the 12,500,000 persons in tenant families on a more secure basis.

W. L. Blackstone of Wynne, Ark., who said he had been "a share cropper most of my life," suggested the Federal Government encourage unionization of tenants, croppers and farm labor as "first step" in solving tenant problems.

The only tenant farmer on the commission, Blackstone described himself as the father of "10 children, and a preacher on Sundays."

Two Negro educators, F. D. Patterson of Tuskegee Institute, Ala., and Charles S. Johnson of Fiske University at Nashville, Tenn., discussed tenancy problems as related to their race.

Carl Bailey, Governor-Elect of Arkansas, scene of a recent tenancy conference, and tenancy disturbances, said "this was not a class or race problem, but one of economics."

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Jasper, Fla., News
April 24, 1936

## NEGRO FARMERS OPTIMISTIC OVER NEW FARM PROGRAM

Many Negro farmers of Hamilton and Suwannee counties are very optimistic over the new soil conservation program that is being conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture and administered through its various agencies.

Experiences have taught the negro farmer during the past years that it pays to cooperate. Many of them have met the county agent and committeemen at various points in the county designated by them for this purpose and have filled out the work sheets; making application for the grant to share in certain benefits offered them under the new plan.

During the past four weeks this agent has succeeded in assembling more than six hundred farm operators, house wives and community club leaders in various community meetings throughout the counties for the purpose of giving certain information they wanted regarding the nature and purpose of the program.

Some of the features embodied in the program are as follows: (1) to induce the farmer to save his lands from waste and destruction by planting some legumous crops and terracing the lands under certain conditions to prevent soil erosion caused by winds and excessive rain fall (2) to maintain and improve the fertility of the soils also by the planting and proper handling of certain legumous crops, better known as soil building crops (3) to raise more of those commodities that are needed for food and feed and less speculative crops. However the program is flexible in its nature and can be adjusted upward or downward as conditions of the individual farmer may require.

N. H. Bennett,
Local Farm Agent

General

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# Cotton, Stepchild Of Research, Needs Attention

**BY DR. J. R. MEADOW**
Professor of Chemistry at Southwestern

*"If you have no problem in your business; if you are perfectly satisfied with your product, your processes and your costs in all respects; if you have no trouble from competition or other sources of worry and are sure you are not going to have any for ten years to come—then you may not need research."*

—Charles F. Kettering of General Motors

ALL who attended the Second Dearborn Conference at Dearborn, Mich., were impressed by the great possibilities ahead of us and the innumerable uses of farm products which can be realized only by the application of purely scientific methods. The conference was called by Francis P. Garvan, president of the Farm Chemurgic Council and the Chemical Foundation, and was attended by some 800 leading agriculturists, progressive industrialists and eminent scientists of the country.

The purpose of the Farm Chemurgic Council is to advance the industrial use of farm products through applied sciences, thus helping to relieve the surplus crop situation, creating new industries and aiding in the solution of the unemployment problem. It is the aim of the council to encourage the joint co-operation of agriculture, industry and science in promoting and applying the fruits of research. Such co-operation should result in:

(1) The gradual absorption of much of the domestic farm surplus by domestic industry.

(2) Put idle acres to work profitably.

(3) Increase the purchasing power of the American farmer on a stable and more permanent basis and thereby—

(4) Increase the demand for manufactured products, and, thus—

(5) Create new work for idle hands to do.

It is not expected that such a program will be a panacea to all the economic ills of the country, nor does it intend to be a complete answer to the farm problem. But farm chemurgy means putting chemistry to work for the farmer, and with that in view it does seem that the council is approaching the situation from a common sense viewpoint.

The organization of the Farm Chemurgic Council dates back a little over a year ago. Since that time there has been a growing interest from all sections of the country in its program to activate research tending toward new uses for agricultural products in industry. Conferences have been held in New England, several in the middle western and southern states, and on the Pacific coast. Committees of the council have also held a series of meetings in their respective fields, such as soybeans, tung oil, research alcohol, and southern slash pine.

**Now in this connection it appears that we are overlooking the development of one of the most vital of the nation's crops, namely cotton. Before going into any details about the cotton crop, let us briefly review the progress in other fields that has been made in 15 months' time through the aid and sponsorship of the Farm Chemurgic Council.**

The utilization of southern slash pine and loblolly pine in the manufacture of both craft and newsprint paper is a part of the council's program. Through the efforts of Dr. Charles H. Herty pine pulp can now be made into a satisfactory grade of paper and millions of acres of slash pine in the south are made potentially available to the American newsprint and paper field. Canada, which is the principal supplier, is fast becoming unable to meet increased demands. The erection of paper plants valued at $10,000,000 in the south including one at Savannah and one at Crossett, Ark., is indicative of the remarkable development which has been made possible by the Herty process.

Another of the council's interests is that of the development of the soy bean industry. Much progress has already been reported in the utilization of soy bean proteins and soy bean oil in industry. Soy bean production in 1935 was almost double that of 1934, yet the demand was so great that importations were made from Manchuria equivalent to the output of 1,000,000 acres.

Many automobile parts are now made from soy bean plastics, notably by the Ford Motor Co. The use of soy bean oil in place of other imported vegetable oils in the manufacture of paints and lacquers is now an accepted standard practice in the paint and varnish industry.

The cultivation of perilla and tung oil crops in this country is being investigated and their uses studied. Perilla oil, which is produced in Japan and Manchuria, is an excellent drying oil superior to linseed oil in many respects. Trial plantings of this crop are now being conducted in 28 different localities under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. Tung oil trees are being planted in the subtropical regions of the United States, notably in southern Mississippi and Florida, and it is believed by experts in this field that the American product will be equal to that imported.

The production of power alcohol by the farmer as a blending agent in gasoline is advocated by Mr. Garvan and the Farm Chemurgic Council. There are certain obvious difficulties which will have to be overcome before such a plan will be generally accepted. The purpose of blending gasoline with 10 per cent alcohol (Great Britain is now blending her gasoline with 33 1-3 per cent alcohol!) is twofold. First, to conserve our supply of petroleum, the extent of which is uncertain, and second, to aid the farmer by growing products which can be converted into alcohol. Certain crops, such as the sweet potato, corn, artichokes, etc., have been found to be excellent sources of grain alcohol.

Much interest has recently been centered in growing artichokes in this country largely because of the possibility of manufacturing levulose, a sugar, and of alcohol from the raw stock. Dr. W. L. Burlison, of the University of Illinois, has made a study of the Jerusalem artichoke which belongs to the sunflower family. He says that it can be grown in practically every state in the Union. It is an annual and is reproduced mainly from tubers which are somewhat similar in appearance to the potato.

**But what about cotton? Who is interested in the crop which is so vital to the southern farmer? There seems to be a general agreement among scientists and industrialists that something should be done about it, but somehow nobody has yet done very much about it. It is quite true that the Farm Chemurgic Council would be just as interested in developing new uses for cotton and its byproducts as it would be in developing any other crop, but cotton has not been pushed for several reasons. The first reason is because there has not been sufficient initiative on the part of any particular group to create the necessary interest. Another very good reason is found in the complexity of the problem—the cellulose fiber is not a simple chemical compound whose properties are well known to everyone. Then again, the advent of new synthetic fibers has temporarily placed cotton to a disadvantage and the chemist, as well as the layman, has been prone to take the laissez-faire attitude and ride the bandwagon.**

Therefore, one of two things must happen. Either we must abandon cotton as our major crop in the south and turn to new crops, some of which have already been mentioned, or, put forth a determined effort with the aid of chemistry, physics, and botany to discover new uses for products of the cotton plant.

Except for the research on cellulosic materials which is carried out by a few individual companies in this country, nothing fundamental is being done.

After the World War the Textile Alliance, which served as agent for the sale of German dyes in the United States, found itself holding a net profit of some $1,900,000. After liquidation by federal action, $1,400,000 was finally paid over to the Textile Foundation, Inc., which was organized in the spring of 1930. Quoting from the Journal of Chemical Education, Vol. 9, 1886 (November, 1932): "A few small grants from its income were made to start obviously worthy projects. As a result a bibliography and directory of textile design is now available, and a report on the commercial problems of the woolen and worsted industries has been completed. Similar reports on the commercial problems of the cotton, and of the silk and rayon industries are now in course of preparation. The foundation then decided that its greatest need was complete information as to all textile research work under way.

"After further consideration, the foundation decided that the greatest immediate need of the textile industry was to enlist the interest of more trained scientists in the field. To accomplish this, fellowships were offered for postgraduate work, to run for one year. . . ."

In 1935 there were 11 such fellowships granted by the Textile Foundation. Of the 11 fellowships granted, six were on general subjects, two were concerned with dye-stuff processes, and three were on subjects pertaining to silk. From this it can be seen that very little attention has been given to work specifically on cotton.

**In Great Britain the need for an extended program of research on cotton has been recognized since 1922, when the Shirley Institute was established at Manchester by the British Cotton Industry Research Association to foster research work in connection with the cotton industry.**

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**In spite of these facts there is no research organization in the United States which is comparable to the Shirley Institute in England, a country which doesn't grow a pound of cotton.**

That there is an urgent need for a cotton research organization in America is without question. Dr. C. M. A. Stine, vice president E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co., states that "the most important point in the consumption of agricultural products brought about by science in industry is that more fundamental research is required to enlarge the market for agricultural products. We do not by any means know enough about the fundamental structure, the composition and properties of cellulose from various sources, various types of vegetable oils, the carbohydrates such as sugars and starches. Our ignorance of proteins is still more conspicuous."

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Agriculture - 1936
Condition of

General

# Cotton, Stepchild Of Research, Needs Attention

BY DR. J. R. MEADOW
Professor of Chemistry at Southwestern

*"If you have no problem in your business; if you are perfectly satisfied with your product, your processes and your costs in all respects; if you have no trouble from competition or other sources of worry and are sure you are not going to have any for ten years to come—then you may not need research."*

—Charles F. Kettering of General Motors

ALL who attended the Second Dearborn Conference at Dearborn, Mich., were impressed by the great possibilities ahead of us and the innumerable uses of farm products which can be realized only by the application of purely scientific methods. The conference was called by Francis P. Garvan, president of the Farm Chemurgic Council and the Chemical Foundation, and was attended by some 800 leading agriculturists, progressive industrialists and eminent scientists of the country.

The purpose of the Farm Chemurgic Council is to advance the industrial use of farm products through applied sciences, thus helping to relieve the surplus crop situation, creating new industries and aiding in the solution of the unemployment problem. It is the aim of the council to encourage the joint co-operation of agriculture, industry and science in promoting and applying the fruits of research. Such co-operation should result in:

(1) The gradual absorption of much of the domestic farm surplus by domestic industry.

(2) Put idle acres to work profitably.

(3) Increase the purchasing power of the American farmer on a stable and more permanent basis and thereby—

(4) Increase the demand for manufactured products, and, thus—

(5) Create new work for idle hands to do.

It is not expected that such a program will be a panacea to all the economic ills of the country, nor does it intend to be a complete answer to the farm problem. But farm chemurgy means putting chemistry to work for the farmer, and with that in view it does seem that the council is approaching the situation from a common sense viewpoint.

The organization of the Farm Chemurgic Council dates back a little over a year ago. Since that time there has been a growing interest from all sections of the country in its program to activate research tending toward new uses for agricultural products in industry. Conferences have been held in New England, several in the middle western and southern states, and on the Pacific coast. Committees of the council have also held a series of meetings in their respective fields, such as soybeans, tung oil, research alcohol, and southern slash pine.

**Now in this connection it appears that we are overlooking the development of one of the most vital of the nation's crops, namely cotton. Before going into any details about the cotton crop, let us briefly review the progress in other fields that has been made in 15 months' time through the aid and sponsorship of the Farm Chemurgic Council.**

The utilization of southern slash pine and loblolly pine in the manufacture of both craft and newsprint paper is a part of the council's program. Through the efforts of Dr. Charles H. Herty pine pulp can now be made into a satisfactory grade of paper and millions of acres of slash pine in the south are made potentially available to the American newsprint and paper field. Canada, which is the principal supplier, is fast becoming unable to meet increased demands. The erection of paper plants valued at $10,000,000 in the south including one at Savannah and one at Crossett, Ark., is indicative of the remarkable development which has been made possible by the Herty process.

Another of the council's interests is that of the development of the soy bean industry. Much progress has already been reported in the utilization of soy bean proteins and soy bean oil in industry. Soy bean production in 1935 was almost double that of 1934, yet the demand was so great that importations were made from Manchuria equivalent to the output of 1,000,000 acres.

Many automobile parts are now made from soy bean plastics, notably by the Ford Motor Co. The use of soy bean oil in place of other imported vegetable oils in the manufacture of paints and lacquers is now an accepted standard practice in the paint and varnish industry.

The cultivation of perilla and tung oil crops in this country is being investigated and their uses studied. Perilla oil, which is produced in Japan and Manchuria, is an excellent drying oil superior to linseed oil in many respects. Trial plantings of this crop are now being conducted in 28 different localities under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. Tung oil trees are being planted in the subtropical regions of the United States, notably in southern Mississippi and Florida, and it is believed by experts in this field that the American product will be equal to that imported.

The production of power alcohol by the farmer as a blending agent in gasoline is advocated by Mr. Garvan and the Farm Chemurgic Council. There are certain obvious difficulties which will have to be overcome before such a plan will be generally accepted. The purpose of blending gasoline with 10 per cent alcohol (Great Britain is now blending her gasoline with 33 1-3 per cent alcohol!) is twofold. First, to conserve our supply of petroleum, the extent of which is uncertain, and second, to aid the farmer by growing products which can be converted into alcohol. Certain crops, such as the sweet potato, corn, artichokes, etc., have been found to be excellent sources of grain alcohol.

Much interest has recently been centered in growing artichokes in this country largely because of the possibility of manufacturing levulose, a sugar, and of alcohol from the raw stock. Dr. W. L. Burlison, of the University of Illinois, has made a study of the Jerusalem artichoke which belongs to the sunflower family. He says that it can be grown in practically every state in the Union. It is an annual and is reproduced mainly from tubers which are somewhat similar in appearance to the potato.

**But what about cotton? Who is interested in the crop which is so vital to the southern farmer? There seems to be a general agreement among scientists and industrialists that something should be done about it, but somehow nobody has yet done very much about it. It is quite true that the Farm Chemurgic Council would be just as interested in developing new uses for cotton and its byproducts as it would be in developing any other crop, but cotton has not been pushed for several reasons. The first reason is because there has not been sufficient initiative on the part of any particular group to create the necessary interest. Another very good reason is found in the complexity of the problem—the cellulose fiber is not a simple chemical compound whose properties are well known to everyone. Then again, the advent of new synthetic fibers has temporarily placed cotton to a disadvantage and the chemist, as well as the layman, has been prone to take the laissez-faire attitude and ride the band-wagon.**

Therefore, one of two things must happen. Either we must abandon cotton as our major crop in the south and turn to new crops, some of which have already been mentioned, or, put forth a determined effort with the aid of chemistry, physics, and botany to discover new uses for products of the cotton plant.

Except for the research on cellulosic materials which is carried out by a few individual companies in this country, nothing fundamental is being done.

After the World War the Textile Alliance, which served as agent for the sale of German dyes in the United States, found itself holding a net profit of some $1,900,000. After liquidation by federal action, $1,400,000 was finally paid over to the Textile Foundation, Inc., which was organized in the spring of 1930. Quoting from the Journal of Chemical Education, Vol. 9, 1886 (November, 1932): "A few small grants from its income were made to start obviously worthy projects. As a result a bibliography and directory of textile design is now available, and a report on the commercial problems of the woolen and worsted industries has been completed. Similar reports on the commercial problems of the cotton, and of the silk and rayon industries are now in course of preparation. The foundation then decided that its greatest need was complete information as to all textile research work under way.

"After further consideration, the foundation decided that the greatest immediate need of the textile industry was to enlist the interest of more trained scientists in the field. To accomplish this, fellowships were offered for postgraduate work, to run for one year. . . ."

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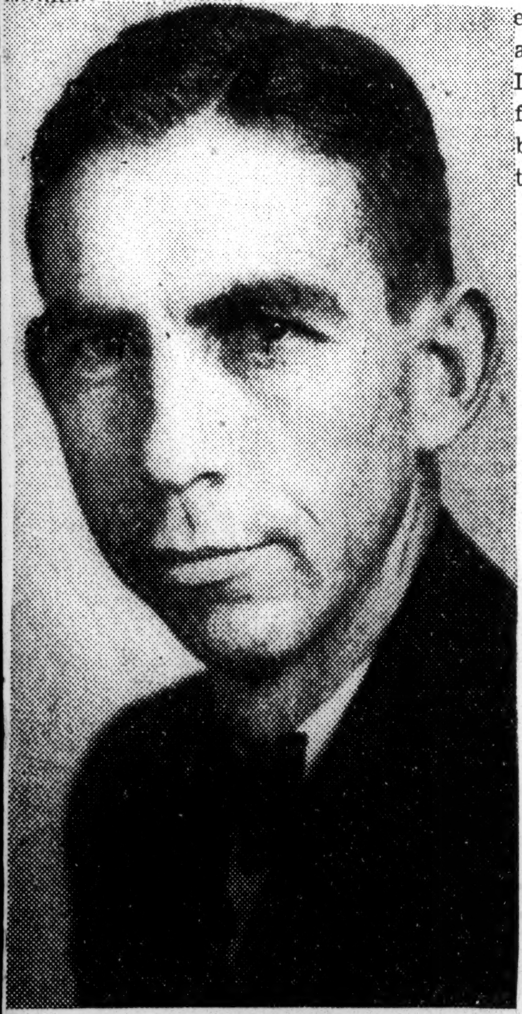
The newly formed Cotton Research Foundation in Memphis is making a definite step in the right direction. It has the unusual opportunity of becoming a vital organ in co-ordinating research and industry in the south as well as in the nation. In order that it can be successful in carrying out its aims it should receive the full support and co-operation of all clear thinking individuals.



Dr. Meadow

Union City, Tenn., Messenger
June 20, 1936

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The total farm population of 31,300,907 on January 1, 1935 was composed of 27,058,851 white persons (including Mexicans) and 4,742,056 colored persons (Negroes, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and other non-white races). In 1930, approximately 1 percent of the farm population of 30,445,350 was not classified by color. Of the 30,157,513 persons living on farms, which were classified by color, 25,227,518 were white and 4,929,995 were colored. On the basis of these figures the increase in the number of white persons living on farms has been about 1,550,000 and the decrease in the number of colored persons has approximately 190,000.

Chattanooga, Tenn. News
April 18, 1936

## Eight Important Points

CONSIDERING the problems of Southern agriculture, and particularly of procuring some social security for the farmers of the South, Dr. H. C. Nixon, of Tulane University, points out that eight items must be taken into account in any plan that is made. In a little booklet, "Social Security for Southern Farmers," published by the Southern Policy Committee, he lists them thus:

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2. The large proportion of children on the Southern countryside.
3. The precarious comparative status of the rural Negro who plays an important but declining part in Southern farming.
4. The risks, insecurity and instability of the prevailing system of farm tenancy with its inevitable emphasis on the one-crop system.
5. The cotton farmer's dilemma of having to sell in a world economy and buy in a national economy, with a tariff-price differential against him.
6. The plight of Southeastern hill farmers because of competition from the mechanized farming of the Southwest and the lowlands.
7. The tendency of Southern farm lands to lose productivity rapidly in the absence of positive measures of conservation.
8. The high percentage of illiteracy in the rural South.

It seems to us that this is a proper listing of the important elements to be considered in the Southern agricultural problem. As Dr. Nixon says, "if the social security effort is to be more than a sop or a gesture toward safeguarding standards of health and living for the dependent children in Southern agriculture, that agriculture must provide a balanced abundance."

And when one thinks of the more abundant economy, one recognizes that it would do two things for the South: First, it would reduce rural poverty and the need for State aid. Again, it would directly or indirectly increase the flow of tax funds to the Treasury of the States. Fiscal gymnastics cannot effect these needed ends. To procure genuine security, the rural South "must produce more, get more and consume more."

## THE SOUTH'S DILEMMA

Already one of the South's leading industrialists, a farmer, and an enlightened and public-spirited citizen in more ways than one, Alabama's Donald Comer, adds to his other accomplishments that of writer and publicist. As the president of the National Association of Manufacturers Mr. Comer has become the spokesman for that group on the matter of Japan's threat to the American textile market. In the current issue of Liberty magazine, he sets forth his case eloquently and impressively. Because Mr. Comer has never been too busy to hear the farmer's case, it now becomes the duty of the farmer to lend an ear to him. It will be remembered that the president of the Avondale Mills announced publicly his sympathy with the AAA processing taxes at a time when such a view did not make him any more popular with his associates in the textile business.

Mr. Comer has been guided consistently by the conviction that "what is good for the Southern farmer is also to the advantage of the Southern textile manufacturer and vice versa."

There are many factors that have contributed to the present status of Japan's competition. First of all is the fact that only in the last three years has Japan been in the business on a large scale. Japan's political and economic interests are fused in a Fascistic form of government in which the Emperor is the custodian of all the sun gods, business and politics. Gathering from what little Americans know of the nation, every Japanese worker is willing to exist on whatever is given him for the reason that he works for the glory of Japan and the Emperor rather than for his particular employer.

It should be recalled that the textile industry was the first to cooperate with the opportunity offered by the NRA three years ago to raise wages. Wages were practicaly doubled and the gains have not been abandoned.

There can be no doubt that the NRA was not a contributing cause in the loss to American producers of such markets as the Philippines and South American countries. There was no competing for these markets with American manufacturers working under NRA codes calling for 35 cents an hour or more and Japanese interests working labor for less than 35 cents a day.

At present Japan has captured a portion of the American market. Thus far, however, consumption of Japanese goods does not amount to less than 1 per cent of the total. As we understand Mr. Comer's case it is not so much the loss that troubles American textile interests as it is the inability to predict the extent it will reach in the future. In other words, how far will Japan go? She has refused to make any "gentleman's agreement" to put a limit to her exports to this country.

President Roosevelt has, under authority granted him in the flexible provisions of the tariff act, raised the tariff on certain types of textiles 42 per cent. What effect this will have is not known. Until it is known whether the increase will stem the tide of Japanese goods, textile manufacturers will still be laboring under the uncertainty of whether to modernize their plants, how much of the American market they can expect to hold, and kindred questions, Mr. Comer contends.

The whole question has too many ramifications to be settled arbitrarily without serious and painstaking thought of the considerations involved. Perhaps the most potent one is that Japan is now our best foreign customer for cotton, having bought something like a million and a half bales last year. At the same time, as Mr. Comer points out, the Southern manufacturer and not Japan is the cotton farmer's best customer.

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His figures showed that there were approximately 233,222 Negro farm owners in 1920 and the number decreased to 194,540 in 1925 and was down to 182,019 in 1930.

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These farms are largely devoted to cotton production, and a bale worth $37.40 in 1932 brought $90, with AAA benefit payments, in 1935.

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# Hope Offered To Farmers By Chemurgic Council Head In Mid-South Forum Speech

## Fritsche Praises Newspaper And C. Of C. In Talk Stressing Development Of New Crop Markets

Carl B. Fritsche, managing director of the Farm Chemurgic Council, Dearborn, Mich., addressed the Mid-South Farm Forum at Ellis Auditorium yesterday on "Industry Considers Agriculture."

The text of his address in part is:

It is a most promising indication when a metropolitan newspaper such as The Memphis Commercial Appeal, located in an industrial center, and the Memphis Chamber of Commerce join as sponsors of an annual forum designed to aid the farmer in the solution of his many problems.

Mr. John H. Sorrells and his editorial associates are to be congratulated upon the opportunity of rendering public service of such high degree.

It is one of the Cannons of Journalism that a newspaper's "opportunities as a chronicle are indissolubly linked to its obligations as teacher and interpreter." Judged by the success of this Farm Forum and of the annual Plant To Prosper contests enrollment of participants in which exceeds 4,000 this year, it is quite evident that The Memphis Commercial Appeal accepts its responsibility as a teacher and as an interpreter seriously.

**Man's Sustenance From Soil**

In serving as joint sponsor of this Farm Forum, it is quite obvious that the Memphis Chamber of Commerce as well as Mr. R. S. Snowden, Jr., chairman of its agricultural committee, agree with Mr. Henry Ford's most notable saying, namely, "Man's sustenance issues from the soil and not from merchants' shelves."

It is also gratifying that the United States Chamber of Commerce is a participant in this forum through Mr. Delos L. James, manager of its Agricultural Service Department. Every endeavor designed to bridge the gulf which, in the old days of agriculture, very definitely separated the farm from the city is evidence of a healthy change in habit of thought which augurs well for the future.

Agriculture and industry are the two foundation stones of our national economy and neither one can prosper at the expense of the other. This is proven by the fact that during the last generation, with the exception of the war years, the annual gross income of American farmers has been almost identical in amount with the sum total of our factory pay rolls.

When the farmer's income shrinks his purchasing power diminishes; the demand for factory products falls; production is curtailed and the unemployed begin their weary tramp up and down the streets. One is cause and the other is effect, and the lesson to draw from this is that the basic place to begin reconstruction is in rural America. Solve the problems of the farmer and other economic ills will rapidly subside.

**No Selfish Purposes**

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And it is not a pleasant prospect to reflect that the span of years in our country's history during which we shipped our surpluses abroad will in the future be defined as the Period of Great Exploitation, during which we mined out the precious fertility of our soil and exported it, mostly in the form of cotton, wheat and lard.

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But that day is gone, because the virgin areas are no longer available for ruthless exploitation. We must concern ourselves now with the conservation of what remains and with the restoration of normal fertility to those areas which are not hopelessly decadent.

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# Hope Offered To Farmers By Chemurgic Council Head In Mid-South Forum Speech

## Fritsche Praises Newspaper And C. Of C. In Talk Stressing Development Of New Crop Markets

Carl B. Fritsche, managing director of the Farm Chemurgic Council, Dearborn, Mich., addressed the Mid-South Farm Forum at Ellis Auditorium yesterday on "Industry Considers Agriculture."

The text of his address in part is:

It is a most promising indication when a metropolitan newspaper such as The Memphis Commercial Appeal, located in an industrial center, and the Memphis Chamber of Commerce join as sponsors of an annual forum designed to aid the farmer in the solution of his many problems.

Mr. John H. Sorrells and his editorial associates are to be congratulated upon the opportunity of rendering public service of such high degree.

It is one of the Cannons of Journalism that a newspaper's "opportunities as a chronicle are indissolubly linked to its obligations as teacher and interpreter." Judged by the success of this Farm Forum and of the annual Plant To Prosper contests enrollment of participants in which exceeds 4,000 this year, it is quite evident that The Memphis Commercial Appeal accepts its responsibility as a teacher and as an interpreter seriously.

### Man's Sustenance From Soil

In serving as joint sponsor of this Farm Forum, it is quite obvious that the Memphis Chamber of Commerce as well as Mr. R. S. Snowden, Jr., chairman of its agricultural committee, agree with Mr. Henry Ford's most notable saying, namely, "Man's sustenance issues from the soil and not from merchants' shelves."

It is also gratifying that the United States Chamber of Commerce is a participant in this forum through Mr. Delos L. James, manager of its Agricultural Service Department. Every endeavor designed to bridge the gulf which, in the old days of agriculture, very definitely separated the farm from the city is evidence of a healthy change in habit of thought which augurs well for the future.

Agriculture and industry are the two foundation stones of our national economy and neither one can prosper at the expense of the other. This is proven by the fact that during the last generation, with the exception of the war years, the annual gross income of American farmers has been almost identical in amount with the sum total of our factory pay rolls.

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rope? I leave the answer to your own common sense.

Do not isolation and self-containment constitute the basis of successful operation of any neutrality pact?

Nor, did Mr. Wallace take you to Michigan where at the present time Mr. Henry Ford is harvesting 10,000 acres of soybeans (one-seventh of his current requirements) confident that the automobile parts made from them will aid in bringing about a new partnership between industry and agriculture.

On the day his big combines began the harvest, Mr. Ford said, "Business is only an exchange of goods. If we industrialists want the American farmer to be our customer, we must find a way to become his customer. This is what I am working for."

### Sound Philosophy

I submit this is sound philosophy.

Had Mr. Wallace taken you on a visit to Ames, Iowa, he could have likewise pointed with pride to the Corn Research Institute, established there by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Iowa State College. The director of this institute, Dr. R. M. Hixon, would have displayed samples of an astounding variety of industrial products made from corn with the end not yet in sight. Aside from cereals, they include corn oil, solvents and alcohols in different form, glucose, cornstarch, etc. And he would have told you that based on previous research work, one large enterprise, the Commercial Solvents Corporation, consumes every day in the year the grain grown annually on 1,000 acres of fertile farm land.

If Mr. Wallace had taken you to College Station, Texas, for a visit with Dr. A. B. Connor, director of the experiment station, the eminent doctor would have disclosed a far-reaching plan for the establishment of a Southern Cotton Research Institute for the two-fold purpose of improving the quality of staple and for finding new industrial uses for the fiber and seed of this most important crop of the southland.

### Institute Urged

And if you had listened in at the annual convention of the Association of Land-Grant Colleges held in Houston, Texas, on Nov. 15 and 16, you would have heard the directors of all of the state experiment stations of the cotton growing states concur unanimously in a recommendation that the establishment of such a cotton research institute be included without delay as part of the scientific development program of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

And then if Mr. Wallace had taken you on an automobile tour of some 21 different states you would have driven over some 500 miles of black top or bituminous surfaced highways reinforced with heavy cotton mesh made from surplus cotton grown in the south, all as the result of recent engineering developments and of Mr. Wallace's allotment of $1,300,000 for the manufacture and donation of the cotton mesh fabric for this important experimental demonstration.

A survey by highway engineers of the possibilities of new outlets in this new use would have revealed that some 600,000 miles of secondary roads will ultimately be given a bituminous surface. On the basis of eight to 10 bales of cotton required per mile of roads built, this represents a potential market for over 5,000,000 bales aside from the amount required for annual maintenance purposes.

But in his forecast of "The Next Four Years in Agriculture," Mr. Wallace did not take you on any such tour of hope for the future.

Instead he gave you the Counsel of Despair with these words:

"Production outruns consumption. We have developed no remedy. . . . As things are shaping now, we shall shortly have surplus production again in both fields and factories. (To repeat) "We shall have to choose among the three alternatives:

To reduce production and employment; to export the surplus without importing an equivalent; or to consume it (the surplus) domestically or an imported equivalent through a fair distribution of the national income."

And there the honorable secretary's forecast ends with a dull thud, disheartening to those who live today and bringing no hope to the youth of tomorrow.

Chattanooga, Tenn. News
December 26, 1936

## The South and Its Land Policy

THE Southern Policy Committee meets in Atlanta January 2 and 3 to discuss proposals for land legislation for the South. Its deliberations and recommendations should be followed by all thoughtful Southerners.

When the Committee meets it will have before it several programs, prepared by men who have made special study of this subject. One of the most interesting is that of Dr. Charles S. Johnson, author and director of the department of social science at Fisk, Nashville's great Negro university.

Dr. Johnson's recommendations in summary are:

1. The enactment of legislation making possible large scale Government purchase of land and assistance to tenants and share croppers in acquiring ownership of this land together with the essential farm dwellings, stock and equipment; and making possible constructive Governmental control, for a period, over production and over the general education of the tenants, to the end of conserving the soil, abandoning submarginal lands, insuring subsistence to the families through the growing of their own foodstuffs, providing security of tenure and of the benefits of improvements made by these long-term purchasers.

The program, however, in its present proposed form, could provide benefits to scarcely more than one-twentieth of the present tenant families in the South. It is obvious that other measures are necessary if any significant changes are to be expected in the area.

2. It is, therefore, proposed that the present provision for Government production loans be extended, to the end of reducing the burden of credit costs to small producers, and to take the place of essential production and subsistence loans to small producers not heretofore reached except through credit merchants.

3. As a part of the program for the retirement of submarginal lands, and of reforestation, there is proposed a broad reclassification of lands, with a view to providing aids to ownership through certain types of homestead exemptions.

4. Extension of financial aid to agricultural cooperative organizations for the purchase of large tracts of land for operation on a profit-sharing basis.

5. Enactment of minimum wage laws for farm laborers.

6. Inclusion of farm laborers in the provisions for social security.

7. Development of a regional Authority in Agriculture, similar in social purpose to the Tennessee Valley Authority, with lands owned by the Government and operated on a participating basis, by agricultural workers, as a yardstick to determine a fair return for agricultural labor, and to demonstrate the benefits of balanced agriculture, soil protection and cooperative production.

8. Extension of the provisions of Government grants to Land-Grant Agricultural institutions, and extension of functions of present demonstration agents and vocational agricultural teachers, and expansion of the numbers of such agents to include a broad program of adult education for agricultural workers in the essentials of present agricultural life.

9. Tariff adjustment to relieve the present overstress on the agricultural areas and, consequently, upon the agricultural workers.

We can readily agree with Dr. Johnson in most of his program. A tenant farmer or sharecropper is not revolutionized by simply making him an owner at Government expense. If he is shiftless or unimaginative, he will soon waste his opportunities, destroy his land and be back on a poverty base again.

Nor can we wait for the slow processes of education to work. What is needed is more intelligence in the cotton South. But we can't pass laws to give people that. We can only spend long years in education and propaganda. So, methods must be devised to guarantee that our shiftless and unintelligent farming system will have to be revised, whether it is understood or not.

## THE SOUTH'S OPPORTUNITY

Already mentioned among the major measures to be dealt with by Congress at its next session is a farm tenancy program. The Democratic platform promised such a program and President Roosevelt at the outset of his campaign asked Senator Bankhead and Representative Jones to make recommendations. Again in his final speech of the campaign President Roosevelt mentioned reduction of farm tenancy among the objectives to be sought in his second term.

Senator Bankhead was in Washington last week and the formulation of a farm tenancy program is one of his chief interests. It is also close to his heart.

It is not known definitely whether the bill which has been passed by the Senate will be proposed in its present form or not, but the principles of that bill will be embodied in proposed legislation.

The experience the Resettlement Administration has had with farm tenancy and its related problems will be useful in formulating a large-scale program. It has been definitely determined that while the matter of ownership is at the heart of the ills of our agricultural economy, it is not the only handicap that must be overcome.

Mere extension of wholesale credit to tenants and share-croppers without careful planning and restriction might result in irritating, rather than curing the ills that afflict agriculture. Many tenants are so handicapped by bad health and lack of education that mere provision of "forty acres and a mule" will give them only a short-lived respite.

The extension service will have an important responsibility if widespread relief of farm tenancy is to be successful. Advice and supervision must be provided, because mere ability to follow a mule does not qualify a farmer to make a living unless he is able to utilize modern agricultural methods. Other existing agencies of State and Federal government will be called upon to cooperate in administering the program provided for in the Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill when, and if, it passes.

There is ample time remaining between now and the next session of Congress for thorough discussion of the many details that must be taken into consideration. The opportunities for enacting the principle of farm tenancy rehabilitation are excellent, but mere enaction of a bill will not be enough regardless of the amount provided.

One of the most important factors that will determine the eventual success or failure of such a program is public understanding of its possibilities. First of all, the impression should not be created that any vast changes can be brought about overnight or that there will be immediate results. Constructive rehabilitation will be carried out over a period of years, perhaps decades. Southern agriculture has been suffering from ills accumulated over a period of a half century and rehabilitation will be a gradual process.

If the South can understand that, if it can see in the principle of the Bankhead bill the fulfillment of the dreams of a far better South than either the past or the present, it will grasp the opportunity which is at hand.

Advertiser
11-6-36
Montgomery Ala

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## THE FARM TENANT PROBLEM

There is little doubt that the economic status of the farm tenant and cropper will receive serious consideration at the coming session of congress.

The subject was brought to the attention of congress during the last session by introduction of the so-called Bankhead bill, cooperatively sponsored by Representative Marvin Jones, of Texas, and Senator John H. Bankhead, of Alabama, which called for a $1,000,000,000 government corporation to finance farm purchases by tenant farmers. It passed the senate but died in the house agricultural committee, which, while agreeing with the principles of the act, held that it was imperfect in its provisions and should be held up for careful consideration and perfection.

The revolt of tenants and sharecroppers in Arkansas, fanned to fever heat by Socialist and Communist agitators, created such a critical situation in agricultural activities of that state that Governor J. M. Futrell appointed a commission of 50 leading citizens to study the problem and work out a program for state and federal action that would end all dangers from future radical activities in the rural sections of that and other states.

Outstanding in the report of this committee was the recommendation that the federal and state governments collaborate in making available for purchase by tenants or croppers lands sufficiently productive to permit the purchaser to pay for them from his produce, over a long term and at low interest rates. The commission proposed that lands used in such a homestead policy be dedicated for all time as homesteads, subject to no incumberance except as the federal government might specify. Supervised credit for farm supplies, supervision to prevent soil erosion and depletion, and legislation to prevent corporations from purchasing lands for farm purposes were suggested as necessary complements of the program, and it was proposed that the states and their political subdivisions make available for the plan lands which have been or may be forfeited for nonpayment of taxes.

The program suggested by the Arkansas commission fits in well with the underlying principles of the Bankhead bill, and possibly meets some of the requirements which were thought advisable to perfect that measure. Speaker Bankhead has already left for Washington, having been summoned by the President for consultation regarding legislative matters, and Senator Bankhead will arrive in the capital within a few days, in all probability to confer wtih the President's new national committee on farm tenancy, which holds its initial meeting in Washington before congress opens its session in January.

Senator Bankhead has announced he will reintroduce his bill, changing the appropriation section so as to provide an annual $50,000,000 appropriation to be administered by the Agricultural Department in promoting farm ownership through long-term, low-interest loans. "The tenant and cropper problem," he holds, "goes to the very tap root of our permanent agricultural and economic well-being. It is up to the congress to find a way to promote farm ownership."

There are thousands of worthwhile renters and tenants, and a smaller number of croppers, desirous of becoming farm owners, and who would make a success of such a venture if they were given a good start, coached along lines of success by capable advisers, and made to feel that they were on the road to independence and an asset to their communities.

Also there are in the agricultural sections of all states tenants and croppers who have no ambition beyond that of a bare existence. The only provision that could be made in a farm tenant-cropper act that would tend to better this class of the population would be some incentive held out to their children to secure sufficient education that would improve their status in life as they advanced toward manhood and womanhood.

The Resettlement Administration activities of the New Deal, which have been in operation in several sections of many states of the nation during the past year and a half, have been successful in their limited scope, and government agents in charge of these projects have had valuable experience in selecting the sort of farmers who are worthy of aid and eliminating those who will not try to help themselves.

The problem has been growing for half a century and it cannot be corrected quickly; but its solution on a sound basis, with wise administration over a period of years, will will go far toward stabilizing agricultural conditions generally.

Constitution 12-20-36 Atlanta, Ga.

## Tenant Farmers

If the farm tenancy problem, on which the Government at last is at work, were merely one of providing credit:

If to solve it the Government had nothing else to do than raise the money for loans to enable landless tenants to become farm owners:

Then, according to Secretary of Agriculture Wallace—who makes his estimates on the basis of $4000 per farm—the undertaking would still be of such magnitude as to require $160,000,000 a year indefinitely just to arrest the spread of tenancy (40,000 farmers a year pass from the owning to the tenancy class), and an additional outlay of $50,000,000 a year for 230 years to re-establish those already in the tenancy class.

But nothing could be more obvious than that tenancy is not just a farm credit problem.

A hundred years ago almost all American farmers were free-holders. Fifty years ago about 25 per cent of our farmers were tenants. Today the percentage is 42.6 and mounting rapidly.

Certainly there must be fundamental economic and human factors in this tenancy spread, factors which must be taken into consideration in any program to reverse the trend.

If the farmers of one and two and more generations ago, who got their land free from the Government when the soil was virgin and productive, were unable to hold onto the land, what reason has the Government to believe that their sons and their sons' sons who are the tenants of today can make a success of farms which have lost most of their fertility and which will be loaded with debt?

* * *

If the Government is to do something more than pour the taxpayers' money into a sieve, we believe it will have to work out new methods in farm economy which will provide a greater chance of success to the tenants it intends to rehabilitate.

Through crop control, the New Deal has done much to stabilize farm prices. It is of paramount importance that this control somehow be continued. For even a genius at farming and business management will go broke in long periods of sagging prices such as our farmers experienced in the 13 years that ended in 1933.

Yet even with stabilized prices, many farmers have not the business acumen and managerial ability to succeed under the system of individualistic farming we have known in the past.

"There are many tenants," observes Secretary Wallace, "who have never demonstrated either desire or capacity to attempt ownership."

Surely it would be a mistake for the Government merely to advance the money to enable such a tenant to buy and equip a farm, and then expect him to pay his debt and make a living out of that farm. The Government cannot afford to do that, because it must protect the taxpayers' equity in the investment and posterity's equity in the fertility of the soil!

* * *

But, despite the immensity of the problem, some progress already has been made by the Resettlement Administration, which has not hesitated to try new methods. It is experimenting with rehabilitation on the old-type individualistic, isolated farms. Also it is trying out a farm community plan, co-operative in character. And between those extremes it is experimenting with another plan designed to utilize the advantages of both individualism and cooperation, with the homes grouped to enable farm families to enjoy the advantages of community life, with tillable acreage contiguous, permitting co-operative use of machinery, and with the whole operation under the general advisory supervision of Government farm experts.

The experimental approach, we believe, is the only sound one to a problem so great, so ramified and so difficult. But experimentation and reckless expenditures do not go well together. None of the plans has been in operation long enough to prove whether it has even a reasonable chance to succeed. And the Administration should go slow in its spending until it learns more about the task it is undertaking.

Post 12-18-36 Birmingham, Ala.

# Secretary Wallace Tackling Tenancy Proble[m] From What Appears To Be More I[...]

## Tugwellian Spending Plan Dropping Into Discard; Agricultural Chief Aware of Human Elements

BY GEORGE MORRIS

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### Tugwell in Saddle A Year Ago

A year ago the Tugwell idea was in the ascendancy. It had a lot more support than the present Wallace idea that the character, disposition, industry and ambition of the tenant plays a major part in determining whether he would get along or not, even if the government should stake him to a farm.

In carrying out the Tugwell idea, Senator Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas introduced a bill to appropriate $50,000,000 a year for 10 years to assist tenants in buying farms. It is not determined if they were serious, both being close to the tenant situation and having personal knowledge of its difficulties, or whether a proposed appropriation of such magnitude was intended to show what it would cost even to touch the fringe of the question.

In any event, the bill was passed by the Senate, at the time when any bill carrying an appropriation was given preferred attention, and the bigger the appropriation the more preference it received. It did not pass the House, and therefore did not become a law.

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In his letter to Secretary Wallace, appointing him chairman and naming his colleagues on the committee, the president mentioned that Senator Bankhead and Representative Jones were interested in the problem and suggested that the committee confer with them, having in mind, apparently, consideration of a similar measure to be proposed to the next Congress.

Secretary Wallace, discussing the rapid increase in tenancy, brought the proposal to the forefront again, but without a great deal of enthusiasm, when he said:

"If some way could be found to stop the increase, and the sum of $50,000,000 were used annually to reduce the number of tenant farms already in existence, at the rate of investment per farm of $4,000, it would require 230 years to eliminate tenancy."

It will be recalled, however, that the proposed $50,000,000 appropriation is merely for the purpose of making land owners of present tenants.

At the present rate of increase, the government, according to the interpretation of Secretary Wallace, would discover at the end of 10, 20, 50 or 100 years, that accession to the ranks of tenants was more rapid than removal of tenants to the status of landowners. In other words, the government would be spending $50,000,000 and getting nowhere.

### He Has Idea Clearly in Mind

Secretary Wallace clearly has in mind that the approach to solution of the tenancy problem is to stop making tenants. He has definite ideas as to how that can be accomplished. It will be time enough after that to start on a big scale toward making landowners of them. His idea is an agricultural program, including controlled production, benefit payments and other provisions, assuring first the establishment of a basic standard of living on the farm and, after that, a reasonable assurance of a minimum cash income per farm.

Absence of these factors, in the precarious existence of the farmer, is what has made tenants of landowners. Farmers, Secretary Wallace knows, are not the masters of their destiny. They have no more to do with the price for which they sell their products, under the traditional methods, than they have with the elements which determine the size of the crop.

Overcoming these inequities and providing reasonable insurance against calamity, is Secretary Wallace's conception of the proper function of government. His idea of preventing foreclosure, loss of many years' of labor and investment, as a result of a disastrous crop year or a ruinous price, has been given the name of "regimentation" by those who believe the farmer should drink his cup to the bitter dregs and secure revenge by voting against the party in power.

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The Tugwell idea, which apparently has gone into eclipse with the departure of its champion, and prospective absorption of the Resettlement Administration into the Department of Agriculture as another bureau, with its name printed on the door in small letters, was entirely different.

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Touching on this proposal, Secretary Wallace said to the committee that "to an unusual degree this whole problem is a human problem and there are many tenants who have never demonstrated either desire or capacity to attempt ownership."

It is interesting to observe that the committee decided, as a preliminary to the approach, that tenancy should not be regarded as undesirable per se. That, of course, is quite a disappointment to some who consider tenancy as prima facie evidence of bondage, and any land owner with tenants guilty of an offense somewhere between a high crime and a misdemeanor.

With the atmosphere thus clarified, and the problem divested of its imaginary and emotional factors the committee is prepared to get somewhere with its proposals.

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"The Southern Policy Committee and others have been studying the pressing problems of land tenancy in the South," says The News. "They express great alarm for the future unless a sound policy of land ownership, farm crop diversification and social advancement is adopted speedily.

"That the problem is acute to the South has been pointed out many times by The News and other Southern newspapers. Not until recently, however, have we noticed that elsewhere frightened eyes are beginning to turn in our direction. For example, Jay Franklin political columnist for The Des Moines Register, a few days ago wrote on the dangers lurking in the Delta Region.

"A social struggle of titanic proportions is under way in the cotton South. This was recognized by the late Huey Long, says Mr. Franklin, who capitalized on discontent and poverty to weld a powerful political machine for himself. Hatreds were fanned by Long which until then had only been smouldering. Now, writes Mr. Franklin, it is a race between curative administration and social hatred, if the President is to prevent catastrophe in the region where 'the top-dog finds that it pays cash dividends to sweat farm labor as even the old slavers never dared work their human chattels.'

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"This is the reason for pushing the Bankhead farm tenant bill through the coming Congress as soon as possible. Even a billion-dollar loan organization to enable tenants and miserable share-croppers to own the land they till would be a small price to pay for avoidance of the inevitable result of the policy of do-nothing and drift which has been pursued since the Civil War.

"As Mr. Franklin says, governments are always six months to six years behind in dealing with problems. The solution of the tenant problem in the cotton South is nearer sixty years behind.

"It is up to Mr. Roosevelt. Huey Long was offering demagogic appeals and pretending to solve the riddle with his "share the wealth" plea. Of course, he could have done nothing. But since he is dead and his power has been transferred to the hands of Regular Democrats the responsibility is theirs to push a solution through with all speed."—Anniston Star.

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"Short of an unexpectedly large increase in the domestic demand for cotton," said Prof. Hoover, "or discovery of some new crop which could be raised in the south for industrial uses, I cannot see any way in which the present agricultural population of the south could find employment in agriculture at returns which would greatly raise its standard of living."

So great is the southern shortage of land, in relation to agricultural population that Prof. Hoover does not believe feasible proposals that tenant farmers devote part of their land to crops for the support of themselves and their livestock. He declared the loss of income from a cash crop such as cotton or tobacco would more than overcome the gain from subsistence farming.

"The future standard of living in southern agriculture depends primarily upon an increase of employment in industry and a fall in the birth rate," Prof. Hoover warned.

Prof. Hoover had dismissed the proposals for large collective farms as impractical, but the Rev. Mr. Kester advocated such a program and attacked the small farm ownership proposals.

He pointed to such collective farms as the Dyess colony, in Arkansas. There, he said, former share croppers have demonstrated their ability to operate a large tract of land with modern equipment, while living in a village with improved opportunities for education and social advancement.

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Augusta, Ga. Herald
May 3, 1936

## FARM OWNERS INCREASED AND TENANTS DECREASED IN SOUTH

According to a release from the department of commerce, bureau of the census, Washington, D. C., colored farm owners increased and tenants decreased in the South during the past five years, 1930 to 1935. Director William L. Austin of the bureau announces an increase during the five years of 4,046 farms operated in the South by colored owners (negroes), Indians, Chinese, Japanese and other non-white races.

Increases in colored owners were reported for Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, West Virginia, Delaware, and Tennessee. However, South Carolina and West Virginia were the only Southern states to report increased acreages for colored owners. There was a decrease of 69,986 other colored farm operators, including 448 managers, 24,489 croppers, and 45,049 other tenants. During the ten years, 1920 to 1930, there was a decrease of 36,570 colored farm owners in the South.

From 1930 to 1935 the land in farms of all colored operators in the South decreased by 2,219,482 acres. This represented a decrease of 945,219 acres for colored owners, 86,362 for managers, 492,415 for croppers and 695,489 for other tenants. There was a decrease in the average number of acres per farm for both colored and white owners in the South, accompanied by a proportionate decline in the value of owned farm land and buildings.

In the North and West the number of colored farm operators—all tenures—increased in the states comprising New England, the Middle Atlantic, the East North Central, the Mountain and the Pacific geographic divisions. The number of white farm operators increased in each geographic division, and in each state.

Albany, Ga., Herald
April 14, 1936

## SHARE CROPPER PROBLEM CLAMORS FOR SOLUTION.

Senator Bankhead, of Alabama, last year introduced and pushed to passage in the United States Senate a bill (S. 2367) which would provide for the working out of this idea: That the federal government buy huge acreages of land now in the possession of mortgage companies, banks and individuals and make it possible through some loan or government mortgage plan for families to purchase small tracts.

The share-cropper system which has been in existence in the South since shortly after the close of the War Between the States is a brake on Southern progress. It is not as bad in principle as slavery, but it is quite as unsound economically, and its effects are pernicious.

Writing in the Birmingham Age-Herald, Carroll Kilpatrick says that in concept Senator Bankhead's bill is similar to the old homestead laws, which made it possible for families to settle and build homes on land they could call their own. But it goes farther in that it would provide the means of establishing service agencies to finance, direct and counsel these farmers in their work, and conduct experiments in unified co-operative farm colonies. Schools and health services could be maintained by the community under the supervision of government experts. Says this writer:

"Nearly 9,000,000 people—approximately 1,700,000 families—live under the tenant system in the Southern States today. Those families—a study from the University of North Carolina indicates—exist on an average annual income of $216.

"What can be done for these victims of an outworn system? What can be done to free the South of the stigma which tenancy places upon it? Is this plan of Senator Bankhead the answer?

"Messrs. Johnson, Embree and Alexander, in their valuable little volume, 'The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy,' say in conclusion that there are four alternatves: (1) starvation, (2) permanent support on the relief rolls, (3) finding new work in the cities, and (4) reorganization of farming in the old cotton states.

"Obviously, the last suggestion is the only one which should receive the serious consideration of thinking Southerners. The first two are beyond question ruled out; the third is patently impossible on account of the existence of an already superfluous amount of labor in the urban districts. The first alternative, starvation, is at the moment the one which seems most likely of winning unless something be done and be done quickly. That is one reason why, if the South would save itself from disruption, radical measures must be taken.

"'The plight of the cotton tenant,' wrote C. T. Carpenter in last October's Scribner's Magazine, 'has at last attracted the attention of our statesmen. There is evidence in the fact that Senator Bankhead, of Alabama, has introduced and passed through the Senate his bill providing $1,000,000,000 to enable tenants and share-croppers to buy their own farms. In advocating his cause, Senator Bankhead does not stand alone in the Senate, but has powerful support.

"'The solution is a matter of great national concern. The cotton-tenant system prevails today over the entire cotton belt. In 1919 it produced crops of the value of $3,800,000,000, one fourth of the total farm income of the United States. The region contains about 295,000,000 acres, nearly one-fifth of the land within the United States.'

"It should be possible, under the Bankhead bill, to develop the industrialized farm community, of which Dr. George W. Carver, of Tuskegee, has talked so much. New products could be developed from waste materials, and the Southern farmer could free himself from the economic enslavement that has held this entire section of the country in thraldom.

"Denmark, Ireland, Germany and other countries have systematically abolished the tenant system. This country, however, has done practically nothing to remedy the growing evil, despite the fact that many statesmen, editors and writers have made plain the dangers inherent in it. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace has said:

"'It seems to me that it will be virtually impossible for America to develop a rural civilization which affords security, opportunity and a fully abundant life for our rural people unless she acts to convert tenants of this sort into owner farmers.'

"Senate Bill S. 2367 must not be allowed to die in the House of Representatives. It must be brought up and acted upon, for it holds the one opportunity for the tenant of the South. The great region below the Potomac is doomed unless we free ourselves from the bondage of the tenant system."

BURLINGTON, N. C.
TIMES NEWS

MAY 20 1936

## WARNING OF THE TENANT FARMER "MENACE"

COGENT and bluntly phrased warning of social unrest emanating from that class of Southerner known as "share-cropper" and "tenant farmer" was sounded yesterday before the Southern Newspaper Publishers' association by Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant resettlement administrator.

Dr. Alexander was right when he said that tenant farming was not peculiar to the South, although it is ordinarily thought so. However, it is certainly in the South that its more blatant phases of poverty and ignorance, degradation [illegible] despair are witnessed.

When there are thousands of families of soil-tillers who have scarcely enough of the poorest kind of food to eat, who live in hovels sometimes indescribably inadequate for human habitation, whose economic flux—at its highest point still tragically low and at its lowest point bestial—depends entirely upon the vagaries of landlord, of crops, of droughts and of governmental beneficence or callousness—well, it is a thoughtless observer who cannot survey this terrible scene and see there a fertile field for what is euphemistically described as "social unrest".

The "radical" is feared and hated in the South—by all but the lowest and poorest of classes. To them in their starvation and social neglect, he offers hope of adequate food and something approaching a decent standard of living. Why shouldn't they listen to him? Why shouldn't cotton choppers of Arkansas, whose income during working months amounts to $6 a week, unionize and strike for better wages ("better" wages, which in this case, if demands were met, would be $9 weekly)?

Why shouldn't anybody—be he a Huey Long or a Soviet red or a Negro communist—who offers hope, no matter how hazy and distant, of bettering their animal lot, be listened to by these people? Certainly the more fortunate of their fellow whites have done nothing to relieve their pathetic condition.

Yes, social unrest is stirring, yeast-like, among these classes of the South. An unrest at suffering the destitution and degradation of social and economic status that oft-times is worse than peonage. And the unrest will grow, as it is growing now, until greed and thoughtlessness are put behind them by the more fortunate and dis-

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Increases in colored owners were reported for Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana, Texas, West Virginia, Delaware, and Tennessee. However, South Carolina and West Virginia were the only Southern states to report increased acreages for colored owners. There was a decrease of 69,986 other colored farm operators, including 448 managers, 24,489 croppers, and 45,049 other tenants. During the ten years, 1920 to 1930, there was a decrease of 36,570 colored farm owners in the South.

From 1930 to 1935 the land in farms of all colored operators in the South decreased by 2,219,482 acres. This represented a decrease of 945,219 acres for colored owners, 86,362 for managers, 492,415 for croppers and 695,489 for other tenants. There was a decrease in the average number of acres per farm for both colored and white owners in the South, accompanied by a proportionate decline in the value of owned farm land and buildings.

In the North and West the number of colored farm operators—all tenures—increased in the states comprising New England, the Middle Atlantic, the East North Central, the Mountain and the Pacific geographic divisions. The number of white farm operators increased in each geographic division, and in each state.

Albany, Ga., Herald
April 14, 1936

**SHARE CROPPER PROBLEM CLAMORS FOR SOLUTION.**

Senator Bankhead, of Alabama, last year introduced and pushed to passage in the United States Senate a bill (S. 2367) which would provide for the working out of this idea: That the federal government buy huge acreages of land now in the possession of mortgage companies, banks and individuals and make it possible through some loan or government mortgage plan for families to purchase small tracts.

The share-cropper system which has been in existence in the South since shortly after the close of the War Between the States is a brake on Southern progress. It is not as bad in principle as slavery, but it is quite as unsound economically, and its effects are pernicious.

Writing in the Birmingham Age-Herald, Carroll Kilpatrick says that in concept Senator Bankhead's bill is similar to the old homestead laws, which made it possible for families to settle and build homes on land they could call their own. But it goes farther in that it would provide the means of establishing service agencies to finance, direct and counsel these farmers in their work, and conduct experiments in unified co-operative farm colonies. Schools and health services could be maintained by the community under the supervision of government experts. Says this writer:

"Nearly 9,000,000 people—approximately 1,700,000 families—live under the tenant system in the Southern States today. Those families—a study from the University of North Carolina indicates—exist on an average annual income of $216.

"What can be done for these victims of an outworn system? What can be done to free the South of the stigma which tenancy places upon it? Is this plan of Senator Bankhead the answer?

"Messrs. Johnson, Embree and Alexander, in their valuable little volume, 'The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy,' say in conclusion that there are four alternatves: (1) starvation, (2) permanent support on the relief rolls, (3) finding new work in the cities, and (4) reorganization of farming in the old cotton states.

"Obviously, the last suggestion is the only one which should receive the serious consideration of thinking Southerners. The first two are beyond question ruled out; the third is patently impossible on account of the existence of an already superfluous amount of labor in the urban districts. The first alternative, starvation, is at the moment the one which seems most likely of winning unless something be done and be done quickly. That is one reason why, if the South would save itself from disruption, radical measures must be taken.

"'The plight of the cotton tenant,' wrote C. T. Carpenter in last October's Scribner's Magazine, 'has at last attracted the attention of our statesmen. There is evidence in the fact that Senator Bankhead, of Alabama, has introduced and passed through the Senate his bill providing $1,000,000,000 to enable tenants and share-croppers to buy their own farms. In advocating his cause, Senator Bankhead does not stand alone in the Senate, but has powerful support.

"'The solution is a matter of great national concern. The cotton-tenant system prevails today over the entire cotton belt. In 1919 it produced crops of the value of $3,800,000,000, one fourth of the total farm income of the United States. The region contains about 295,000,000 acres, nearly one-fifth of the land within the United States.'

"It should be possible, under the Bankhead bill, to develop the industrialized farm community, of which Dr. George W. Carver, of Tuskegee, has talked so much. New products could be developed from waste materials, and the Southern farmer could free himself from the economic enslavement that has held this entire section of the country in thraldom.

"Denmark, Ireland, Germany and other countries have systematically abolished the tenant system. This country, however, has done practically nothing to remedy the growing evil, despite the fact that many statesmen, editors and writers have made plain the dangers inherent in it. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace has said:

"'It seems to me that it will be virtually impossible for America to develop a rural civilization which affords security, opportunity and a fully abundant life for our rural people unless she acts to convert tenants of this sort into owner farmers.'

"Senate Bill S. 2367 must not be allowed to die in the House of Representatives. It must be brought up and acted upon, for it holds the one opportunity for the tenant of the South. The great region below the Potomac is doomed unless we free ourselves from the bondage of the tenant system."

BURLINGTON, N. C.
**TIMES NEWS**

MAY 20 1936

**WARNING OF THE TENANT FARMER "MENACE"**

COGENT and bluntly phrased warning of social unrest emanating from that class of Southerner known as "share-cropper" and "tenant farmer" was sounded yesterday before the Southern Newspaper Publishers' association by Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant resettlement administrator.

Dr. Alexander was right when he said that tenant farming was not peculiar to the South, although it is ordinarily thought so. However, it is certainly in the South that its more blatant phases of poverty and ignorance, degradation and despair are witnessed.

When there are thousands of families of soil-tillers who have scarcely enough of the poorest kind of food to eat, who live in hovels sometimes indescribably inadequate for human habitation, whose economic flux—at its highest point still tragically low and at its lowest point bestial—depends entirely upon the vagaries of landlord, of crops, of droughts and of governmental beneficence or callousness—well, it is a thoughtless observer who cannot survey this terrible scene and see there a fertile field for what is euphemistically described as "social unrest".

The "radical" is feared and hated in the South—by all but the lowest and poorest of classes. To them in their starvation and social neglect, he offers hope of adequate food and something approaching a decent standard of living. Why shouldn't they listen to him? Why shouldn't cotton choppers of Arkansas, whose income during working months amounts to $6 a week, unionize and strike for better wages ("better" wages, which in this case, if demands were met, would be $9 weekly)?

Why shouldn't anybody—be he a Huey Long or a Soviet red or a Negro communist—who offers hope, no matter how hazy and distant, of bettering their animal lot, be listened to by these people? Certainly the more fortunate of their fellow whites have done nothing to relieve their pathetic condition.

Yes, social unrest is stirring, yeast-like, among these classes of the South. An unrest at suffering the destitution and degradation of social and economic status that oft-times is worse than peonage. And the unrest will grow, as it is growing now, until greed and thoughtlessness are put behind them by the more fortunate and dis-

cerning Southerner, at least to the extent that corrective steps to eradicate one of the blackest social evils of Dixie are set in motion.

It is social unrest bred not by the "radical" (glibbest and most meaningless of words!), but by the very exploitive tactics of those who most detest radicalism. On the shoulders of all of us who, through avarice or carelessness or thoughtlessness, countenance a continuation of such misery and depravity, lies the full blame for whatever unrest has been engendered.

**ASHEVILLE, N. C.**
**TIMES**

MAY 21 1936

# Of Twofold Seriousness

PEOPLE of the South's highlands may think that the problem of tenancy is one remote from their interest and their active thinking. For most of the highland tenants are sturdy and prosperous. That attitude would lead the Southern highland dwellers into a serious error, and it was against the consequences of such a mistake that Dr. W. W. Alexander, speaking before the Southern Newspaper Publishers' Association in session here this week, warned the publishers and all other Southerners.

Dr. Alexander, assistant to Dr. R. G. Tugwell in the Resettlement Administration, finds tenancy growing. He showed that it is a problem affecting whites far more than blacks. He discussed it as a problem in every agricultural state, but one that is acute in the South.

It is a grave economic problem, Dr. Alexander pointed out, because it is a problem whose factors are landless people working, many of them, at slave rewards on land steadily deteriorating.

Except here and there at intervals the South has never been a region of radical movements. Dr. Alexander warns us that the condition of the landless population of the South makes this section a "seedbed of social unrest," the sort of social unrest that produces Huey Longs.

What a field there is here in which Huey Longs of the future may recruit their followers may be seen from a brief glance at some of Dr. Alexander's figures. Let those who may say that tenancy is chiefly a matter of Negro farmers, who for the most part can not vote anyway, take note of this:

In 16 Southern states, between 1930 and 1935, the number of white tenants increased over 110,000 while the Negro tenants declined almost 70,000. Today the white workers in the cotton fields outnumber the blacks more than five to three.

Mindful, no doubt, of the possible constitutional hurdles in the way towards resettlement of farmers and aiding them to become farm owners, Dr. Alexander emphasized federal regulation administered through local agencies.

But whatever the method, Dr. Alexander reminds us that it is a task for a whole generation of time. Denmark devoted 50 years to it, but the labor and the outlay paid Denmark rich dividends.

In the last five years tenancy has become a giant of evils striding over every agricultural state, but a giant whose shadow is peculiarly menacing as it rises athwart the cotton and tobacco fields of the South.

Through the Bankhead bill or some similar line of approach, it is time that the South should be on the march against the economic and social menace of increasing millions without land, without decent standard of living and without hope.

# FARM TENANTS' RANKS GROWING

## New Homesteads Bill Is Backed As Cure For Mounting Evil

6-1-36

By Daniel M. Kenney
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON, June 1.—A new warning of the rising tide of tenantry among American farmers has come from a House sub-committee which has just completed a study of the subject.

Birmingham, Ala.

Representative Peterson (D., Ga.) heads the sub-committee, which recommends passage of the Peterson homesteads bill to abolish tenantry and establish a national land policy for freeholding farmers who actually work on the land.

The sub-committee's report points out that complete figures are available only up to 1930, and states:

"In 1930, farm prices and farm production were both above normal, and exchange values as between agriculture and industry were not far below normal, so that the figures for 1930 may be relied upon as fairly representative.

### Average Income

"The average net cash income of the average farm operator in the three respective groups in 1930 was as follows:

"Net cash income per month of owner-operator free of mortgage debt, $36.66; owner-operator with mortgage debt, $15, and tenant farmer, $21."

With the mortgage farm producing even less cash return than tenancy, the owner-operator soon shifts from his status as freeholder to that of tenant, the committee found.

"Struggling against these tremendous odds the American farmer is being driven into a condition of tenantry," the report continues.

"Even now 3,000,000 farm families are settling down to a social state of serfdom heretofore foreign to our great country.

### Independence Dwindling

"Almost 2,000,000 more, with their farm homes heavily mortgaged, struggle on under the burden of debt, hoping that a kind providence will save them from a like fate.

"Less than 2,000,000 families of the nation's once proud group of independent home-owning farmers remain, and their ranks are thinning every year."

The Peterson bill provides for Federal purchases of farm mortgages, the title going to the Government. This land would then provide homesteads free of debt for auctual farm families.

# FARM TENANCY PLANK URGED ON DEMOCRATS

Constitution

## 18 Prominent Southerners Would Have U. S. Enable Farmers To Own Land.

6-6-36

NASHVILLE, Tenn., June 5.—(AP) A conference of 18 southerners, 14 of whom are members of southern university faculties, today indorsed a proposed farm tenancy plank for the 1936 democratic platform to be adopted at the coming national convention.

Atlanta, Ga.

Such a plank was proposed to President Roosevelt recently by six Iowa congressmen who told the President the 1935 census showed 49.6 per cent of tenant operations in their state against 23.8 per cent in 1880.

Charles W. Pipkin, dean of the graduate school and professor of government at Louisiana State University, as spokesman for the Nashville conference, said the group indorsed the position of the Iowa congressmen, whose proposed plank said in part:

"The party pledges itself to continue the use of the credit facilities of the federal government for the relief of distressed farm owners. It further pledges itself to the creation of a sound and constructive legislative program for extending the credit facilities of the federal government to qualified farm tenants to enable them to become farm-home owners.'

Besides Pipkin, those indorsing the proposal were Herbert Agar, associate editor of the Louisville Courier-Journal; John D. Wade, Malcolm H. Bryan and Ed Winfield Parks, of the University of Georgia; Robert Penn Warren and O. Brooks, of L. S. U.; Richmond C. Beatty, of the University of Alabama; James Waller, of Nashville; T. J. Cauley, of Georgia Tech; Henry Clay Evans Jr., of Monteagle, Tenn.; Allen Tate and Andrew Lytle, of Southwestern University, Memphis, and Frank L. Owsley, John Crowe Ransom, Lyle H. Lanier, Donald Davidson and George Marion O'Donnell, of Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

Agriculture - 1936
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# Tugwell Would Battle Destitution On Sun-Scorched Western Plains With Elaborate Federal Program

**By R. G. TUGWELL**
**Resettlement Administrator**
**(Written for The Associated Press)**

Rexford G. Tugwell, one of the leading administration officials wrestling with the problems brought on by the drouth, discusses in this article the measures he believes would result in long-time relief.

THE RAINS have failed again in the northern great plains. We seem to be in the midst of a cycle of dry years.

The most serious drouth in our recorded history happened in 1934. In that year the Federal Government was forced to come to the aid of hundreds of thousands of destitute farmers; the plains were denuded of grass and the crops failed; cattle were slaughtered by the thousands and many families packed their household goods and moved to other parts of the country.

**Effects Cumulative**

The end of that drouth left the Northern great plains area stricken and helpless. With characteristic optimism, many of those who had moved out came back. Herds were built up again and Government credit enabled the farmers to resume their occupation. But the dry years have persisted.

The year 1935 was not so dry as 1934, but 1936 threatens a greater shortage than ever 1934. The situation now is worse because of the cumulative effects of persistent drouth. The water table has fallen. Wells and streams have dried up and many families who were just getting on their feet again have been thrown into panic.

**Blames The Plow**

The emergency measures of 1934 will have to be repeated against this year, but it has become more and more obvious that the Federal Government cannot continue keeping so large a part of the population on relief year after year. Something must be done to stabilize the economy of that region so that the people there can live of their own resources, prosperous years serving to carry them through years of adversity.

One thing is clear. Too much of the land has been put to the plow and not enough has remained in grass. It is not true that dry wheat farming ought to stop altogether; but it is true that too much of it has been attempted. More of the land will have to come into public ownership and be used for grazing purposes so that the grass can act as cover to prevent evaporation and to give protection not only against blowing but also against quick run-off when the rains do come. This is one of the obvious permanent measures which ought to be taken.

**More Public Land Needed**

It is true that the Resettlement Administration has been able to buy and retire some of this land but not enough to affect the general situation. If more land can be bought and water conservancy measures can be pushed — that is, if thousands of little dams can be built and pounds and marshes which were once familiar in that country can be reconstructed—all the rain that does fall can be conserved and the water table raised. This is another permanent measure which seems obvious.

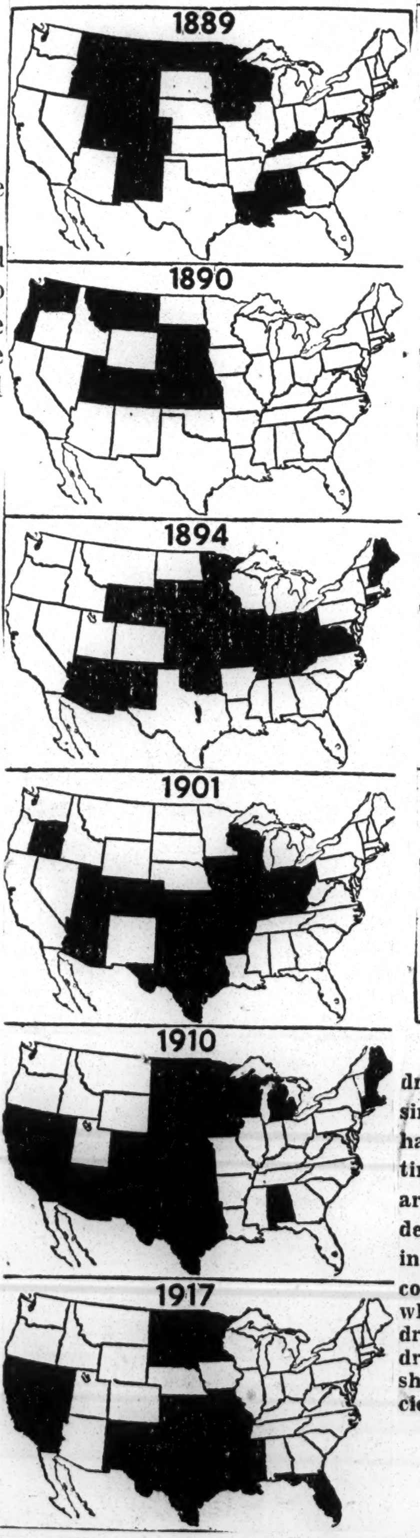
During the drouth of 1934 many families moved away; the same thing is happening again now, but they have no definite place to go, no new opportunities open to them. It is the hope of the Resettlement Administration that we may be able to provide some new homes in other areas for the people who have lost all hope as dry farmers. This depends on the funds at our disposal.

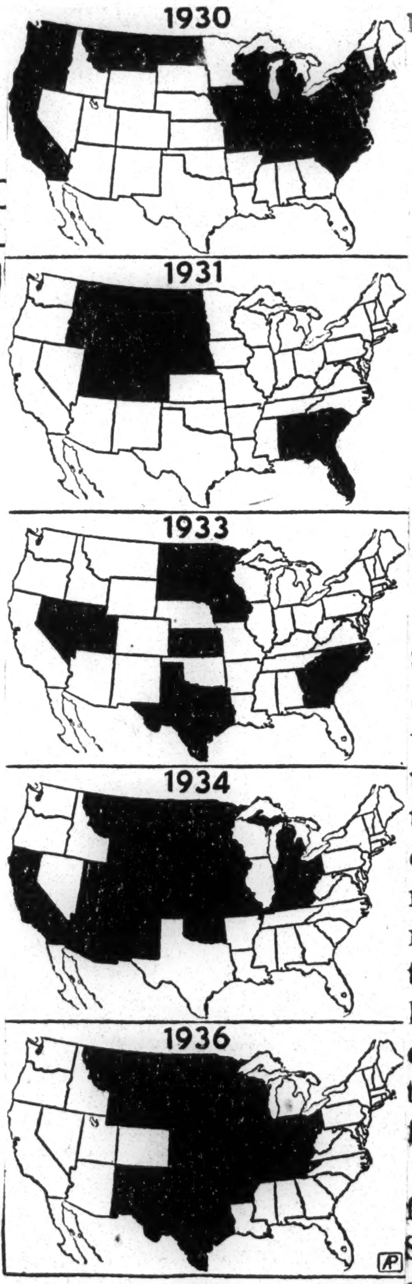
**Emergency Aid First**

In a situation of this kind emergency aid comes first, of course, and what we must do at once is to provide food and shelter for destitute families and to provide some means by which feed and water can be secured for their cattle.

There will be no new resources in this area until another crop can be sown and gathered. Our relief measures therefore have to extend well into next year; in the meantime we hope to make a plan which will look toward reconstruction, so that such disasters may not reoccur in the future.

# Drouth Marks Grim Paths On America's Map




This graphic outline of 11 major drouths which have beset America since 1890 shows that every region has been affected seriously at some time by rainfall deficiency. The areas shown in black had moisture deficiencies of 15 per cent or more, indicative of drouth conditions, according to the geological survey, from whose records the first 10 maps were drawn. The map of the present drouth, from weather bureau figures, shows States with similar deficiencies the first half of this year.

Ft. Gaines, Ga., Georgian
July 9, 1936

# Cattle-Raising For This Section - -

Dr. George Carver, famous agricultural research expert of Tuskegee Institute, is of the opinion that the South will become a cattle empire and cotton will no longer be the major export commodity of this section. Dr. Carver's prediction is in line with those of a number of other agriculturalists who see cotton as the dethroned monarch of this section.

Besides it being desirable for the South to get away from the idea that its economic welfare depends solely on cotton, it is necessary for Southern farmers to diversify and produce something other than this commodity. Growth of foreign cotton with much cheaper labor will make that cotton cheaper on the world market than that produced in this section. In addition, farmers must use the land retired from cotton cultivation under the Soil Conservation Act; most of this surplus acreage is being given over to feed crops and pasture land.

Dr. Carver points out this change from a cotton-growing to a stock-raising South would mean a richer region because "you never saw a rich agricultural section without lots of stock. Cattle is synonymous with fertility of soil, and fertile farms not only have a higher value than soils devoted to one crop, but produce bigger crops." Under the AAA, and the same will probably be true during the life of the new farm program, farmers have spent most of the money the government has paid them for fertilizers; a large stock growing industry would eliminate the necessity of such large expenditures for fertilizers.

Dr. Carver also believes that the growth of large cattle farms would at-

tract many more packing plants to the South. With the advent of an extended system of meat packing centers throughout the Southern states, increased payrolls would result.

The South has the most responsive soil for growth of feed crops in the nation. Little or no expense would be entailed in cattle raising, what with plenty of land available for growing hay and other feed crops at a minimum expense. This type of farming has already been tried and found extremely profitable in sections of North Georgia.

Certainly, with the gradual decline of cotton farming as a profit-making business, cattle-raising should be attempted in this territory. There is plenty of unprofitable land throughout the Chattahoochee Valley that would produce real profits for cattle farmers. The Chattahoochee Valley Chamber of Commerce could render valuable service to this great section by instituting a move to raise more cattle.

### LABOR AND TENANCY

Why has organized labor not been more active in supporting the Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill?

At first glance it would appear that organized labor does not stand to gain directly from a bill aimed at giving tenant farmers an opportunity to become home-owners.

Labor, and particularly the unskilled trades, does have an interest in the status of tenants and share-croppers.

Wage differentials between the South and North can be traced directly to the inexhaustible supply of unskilled labor that can be recruited from farms and is willing to work for the lowest possible wage scales in cities and towns. In his book, Southern Regions, Dr. Howard W. Odum points out the impossibility of raising standards in the semi-skilled and unskilled classifications as long as tenancy and share-cropping are on the increase.

In the lower wage scales there is a spread between the same classification of workers of between 40 and 75 per cent. Whereas in many skilled classifications such as railroad engineers there is little or no differential between various sections of the country.

Labor, therefore, should have a definite interest in any move that seeks to raise farm standards and make life on farms more satisfactory. That is what the Bankhead-Jones bill seeks to do. There is also the additional consideration that any move that betters conditions in the South in general will also benefit labor.

William Mitch, newly-elected president of the Alabama Federation of Labor, and his organization could carry weight if they would add their voices in support of the tenant farm bill now pending in the House of Representatives.

## SYLVESTER AND WHO ELSE?

Colored New Deal leaders make the welkin ring with praise for the great piece of humanitarianism shown by President Roosevelt on the occasion when he took personal charge of the case of Mr. Sylvester Harris of Mississippi, who was about to lose his farm, and had been unable to cut through the amount of red tape necessary to get a government loan for the purpose of saving his property.

It occurred to us that it was a reflection upon the efficiency of the New Deal for it to have been necessary for the colored Mississippi farmer to go to so much trouble and expense to put through a long distance telephone call direct to the President on a matter of such comparative insignificance, when viewed alongside the many great questions the Chief Executive has to handle. We have never looked upon the exploit of Harris as being one which entitled him to go parading up and down the country making campaign speeches for the New Deal. His action in doing so becomes more of a vaudeville stunt than it does one calculated to impress serious minded people of the New deal's generosity or efficiency.

We do not doubt that as against the New Deal's achievement in saving Sylvester Harris' farm there are hundreds of equally deserving "forgotten men" of both races who were unable to get loans when they needed them. We are fortified in this conclusion as we read the experience of a Texas farmer, who has written to Gov. Alf M. Landon, expressing his intention to vote for the Republican nominee for the Presidency. As quoted in the Chicago Tribune of Tuesday, July 14, the Texan got a grievance off his chest as follows:

"I am writing you as a Texas Democrat, and the reason for the letter is that I am convinced that if we are to get out of the present mess we must do away with the New Deal and all the idle dreamers connected with it. I have been trying to hire some farm hands and find them all busy with the 'relief,' doing nothing.

"The President said in one of his nice talks over the radio that if any farmer was in danger of losing his farm to write him. I did and all I ever got was a lot of letters and copies where one high-up had passed the buck to another. I lost the farm. Now I would like to get into the fight and tell the farmers here was one farmer, a Democrat from Texas, who had lost his, and that, to me the "New Deal' was all bull.

"Assuring you of my interest and best wishes for the success of the ticket, I am yours very truly,

"Coal Yates, Grapevine, Texas."

# RESEARCH PUT FORTH TO RESTORE COTTON

## David Cohn Outlines Aims of Foundation to Ginners

## INDORSED BY CONVENTION

### Warns Government Aid and "Fool's Paradise" Cannot Go on Forever—Other Uses Are Necessary

Special to The Commercial Appeal

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., July 28.—The catastrophe that faces the south in the decline in the foreign market for cotton and the development of synthetic fibers can be prevented only by research to discover new uses for cotton, David L. Cohn, of Greenwood, Miss., author and representative of the Cotton Research Foundation, told the annual convention of the Arkansas-Missouri Ginners' Association here today.

"The United States has learned," Cohn said, "that it does not have a monopoly on the cotton fields of the world. The south has helped rivet the shackles on its own neck."

#### 100 Delegates Present

Cohn was the principal speaker before the more than 100 delegates who gathered at the one-day session for mutual discussion of the ginning industry, cotton trade and the farmer.

"We have got to get over the idea that government aid and this fool's paradise we now are living in is going to last forever," Cohn said. "All we in the south have done for the past 50 years is to plant cotton and pray God someone would come along and buy it. If there was a market and the price was high, we all went on a spree. If the price was low we went back to cornbread."

Cotton growers and ginners must awake to the necessity of establishing a medium through which can be ascertained other uses for cotton, because other nations have demonstrated they can get along without cotton grown in this country, and larger corporations, through research departments, are slowly but surely developing products that will take the place of cotton, Cohn said.

He urged those who produce and have to handle cotton, and who make a living by reason of cotton, to get together and make possible the employment of the same scientific minds that now are busy trying to produce substitutes for cotton.

#### King On Decline

He charged that the south has year after year seen "King Cotton" become less powerful, his dominion curtailed, and declared that the remarkable thin gabout it was that those who depend on cotton have done nothing in the way of self-protection or preservation.

He outlined the purpose annd aims of the foudation, picturing it as a scientific experiment made necessary by the threat on every hand to cotton. He suggested a voluntary contribution of 10 cents on every bale; a fund for experimental and research purposes of $300,000, and asserted no one has ever tried to find the many uses that cotton could be put to.

Among resolutions adopted by the ginners was one indorsing the foundation, while another opposed the purchasing by nmembers of the orgaization of seed cotton.

The rate committee recommended for southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas a rate of 35 cents for ginning and $1.75 for cotton seed, and for other parts of Arkansas 30 cents for ginig adn $1.50 fonr cotto seed.

A. C. Spellings, of Marked Tree, president; O. D. Hall, of Cardwell, Mo., vice president; Henry Moore, Jr., of Texarkana, general counsel, and R. B. Gress, of Little Rock, secretary-trasurer, were re-elected.

Among those attending the convention was P. F. Cleaver, who has held almost every office in the state and national organization. He recently concluded a tour of the state, looking over the cotton fields.

"Arkansas will produce 50 per cent more cotton this year than last," he said, "and, better still, it is fine crop—the best quality in years. I look for it to bring 13½ cents and a price of $35 for cotton seed. This fine outlook for cotton is general over the state, and even in the hill sections there is a wonderful crop. The people of Arkansas who grow cotton are going to have money as a result."

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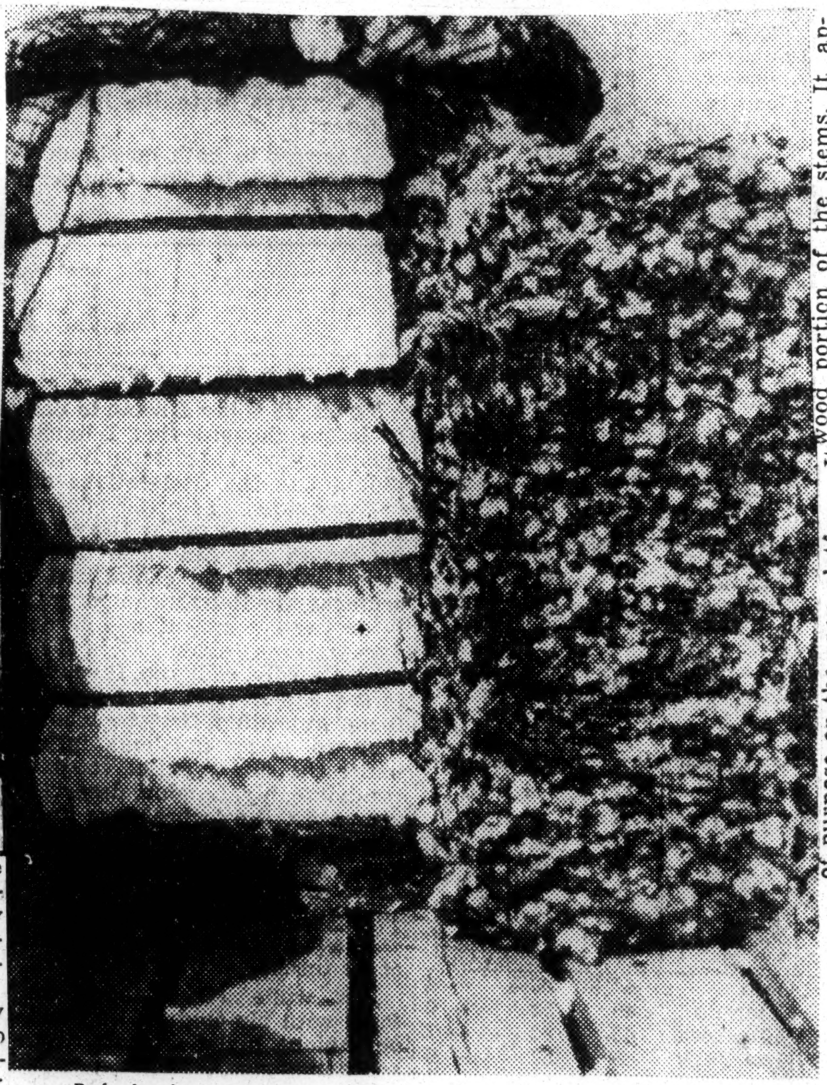
# Cotton Sown Broadcast And Harvested With A Mowing Machine, Proposed Now As Solution To Farmers' Problem

Laboratory and staff at Chapel Hill. They are, reading in the usual order, David Milne, Dr. A. R. Macormac and N. W. Dockery.



Baled whole cotton plant (hay bale size) and standard 500-pound bale of cotton lint.

*Imagine cotton seed sown broadcast, the entire plant harvested with a mowing machine and baled like hay! This may come to pass if laboratory research being conducted by Dr. Frank A. Cameron and a group of associates at the University of North Carolina proves successful. The objective is looking towards the development of the whole cotton plant as a source of oil and alpha-cellulose as revealed in a report made by Dr. Cameron before the Farm Chemurgic Council at Detroit. Conditions in the southeastern states are believed to be duplicated in the hill lands of the Mid-South. The essentials of Dr. Cameron's report follow.*

FOR some years it has appeared improbable that lint cotton can continue to be produced economically in the South Atlantic States, particularly in the Carolinas. It appears that the types that are produced there to advantage, agriculturally, are not those desired by the adjacent mills. The textiles for which these types are best adapted are being displaced by rayons. The character of the terrain does not permit the use of tractors, mechanical pickers, modern methods of insect control by airplane, etc. And, for various reasons, the desirable lints can be produced more cheaply on the delta lands of Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arizona and California.

It appears that a population of perhaps three millions, whose very existence depends upon it, must find another crop to replace the to-be-abandoned cotton. No such crop has been suggested. It would be enormously difficult, if at all possible, to remove so large a population to new locations and return the land to forest. A hopeful suggestion is to modify and cheapen the growing of cotton within the frame of experience and technical ability of the people now growing it, and find a use for it other than the making of cotton textiles.

**Demand for Cellulose**

There is a demand for alpha-cellulose now supplied by processing the tree growths, spruce, poplar and pine, the hardwoods being unsuitable for commercial production. The cotton plant is par excellence a cellulose producer, and now being an annual (although originally a perennial tree growth), it should have advantages over the tree growths. Cotton linters have been and are used for making certain cellulose products and a fairly large literature testified to the possible use of the stems for this purpose.

Briefly, it is proposed to grow the cotton in such manner as to omit part of the cultural operations and the picking of the lint; to harvest the "whole cotton" by mowing it a few inches from the ground: to recover the oil from the seeds, and to obtain alpha-cellulose from the residue, by an appropriate method of processing or pulping. Many difficulties promptly appeared and others developed as the proposal has been studied but not one that is insurmountable or of a serious inhibitive character.

Nicholas W. Dockery, then a student at the University of North Carolina, undertook, in 1929, some pioneer experiments at his mother's plantation in Richmond County, North Carolina, about four miles south of Rockingham. He established a small laboratory there, but the major part of the laboratory work has been done in the university's laboratory at Chapel Hill.

Helpful suggestions and encouragement came from E. E. Hall, director of the Pee Dee Station, near Florence, a branch of the South Carolina State Experiment Station. Mr. Hall had experience in broadcasting cotton, a method we greatly desired testing.

**Changing the Plant**

The guiding principle in our experimental work is a biological one. By crowding and starving a growing organism, especially a growing plant, the adolescent period is shortened and maturity attained earlier and more sharply defined. Obviously, the procedure may be overdone, and how far one can go in this direction advantageously requires study and a discriminating judgment.

In this investigation we have not been concerned with the length of fiber, nor, primarily, with yield per acre, nor size of plant. We have been greatly concerned with a ripening of a maximum number of bolls at one time and a maximum production of cellulose or oil or both, per dollar invested, allowing a reasonable rent for use of the land. Present indications are that this may be met by a small sized plant, with rather spindly stem growth, and a large development of seed and lint.

For instance, the variety, Dixie Triumph, normally produces an extra large plant, with bolls ripening over a period of three months, and requiring three or more pickings.

We have crowded it so that it produces an unusually small plant, with small stems, but a large production of bolls ripening within a week at the end of 25-26 weeks after planting. It appears fundamentally important to have as many as possible bolls ripen at one time or over a short time interval, and this should be the immediate practical aim of the field work.

Sunshine and control of ground water are doubtless the most important factors in plant growth. Little can be done to control them in field experiments and then indirectly. Fertilizer plot experiments and plant breeding and selecting are very desirable but involve long time experiments. So far, our attention has been directed to control by operations of cultivation and to harvestings as being within our resources and of immediate importance for the practicality of the suggestion.

**Progress of Field Work**

The first work done by Mr. Dockery was to harvest cotton plants by cutting them a few inches from the ground, with a heavy knife. The plants were dried by piling in small shocks as with hay. They were then carted to a nearby gin where they were baled.

Bales with jute coverings and bales with no covering were stored, some in a warehouse, and some left, of purpose on the open platform. It may be noted, at this point, that uncovered bales on the open platform showed no detectable deterioration at the end of five years. There was a slight darkening of the lint on the surface due largely to accumulated dust and dirt but due partly, doubtless, to chemical change.

In the fifth year the larvae of a bettle, "Teneerio obscurus, Zabrisius," consumed practically all the pith in the stem, but seemingly left untouched lint, seeds, cusps and wood portion of the stems. It appears from these observations that the problem of storage, which at first loomed large, is not a very serious one.

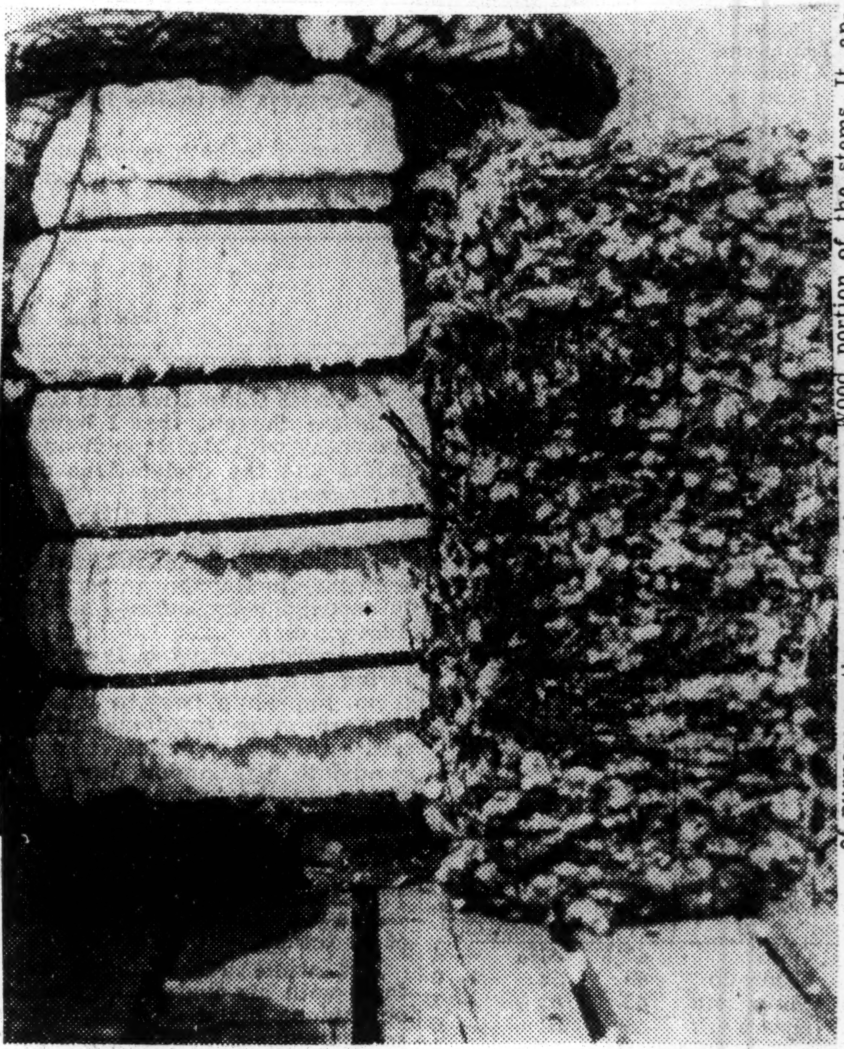
Protection from dust and dirt may prove essential. It may be noted here that practically all leaves had fallen from the plants in handling them between the field and gin house. This loss appears inescapable, but without significance, since the dried leaves have been shown to be a very small percentage of the whole plant.

Agriculture-1936
Condition of

General.

# Cotton Sown Broadcast And Harvested With A Mowing Machine, Proposed Now As Solution To Farmers' Problem

Laboratory and staff at Chapel Hill. They are, reading in the usual order, David Milne, Dr. A. R. Macormac and N. W. Dockery.



Baled whole cotton plant (hay bale size) and standard 500-pound bale of cotton lint.

*Imagine cotton seed sown broadcast, the entire plant harvested with a mowing machine and baled like hay! This may come to pass if laboratory research being conducted by Dr. Frank A. Cameron and a group of associates at the University of North Carolina proves successful. The objective is looking towards the development of the whole cotton plant as a source of oil and alpha-cellulose as revealed in a report made by Dr. Cameron before the Farm Chemurgic Council at Detroit. Conditions in the southeastern states are believed to be duplicated in the hill lands of the Mid-South. The essentials of Dr. Cameron's report follow.*

FOR some years it has appeared improbable that lint cotton can continue to be produced economically in the South Atlantic States, particularly in the Carolinas. It appears that the types that are produced there to advantage, agriculturally, are not those desired by the adjacent mills. The textiles for which these types are best adapted are being displaced by rayons. The character of the terrain does not permit the use of tractors, mechanical pickers, modern methods of insect control by airplane, etc. And, for various reasons, more desirable lints can be produced more cheaply on the delta lands of Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arizona and California.

It appears that a population of perhaps three millions, whose very existence depends upon it, must find another crop to replace the to-be-abandoned cotton. No such crop has been suggested. It would be enormously difficult, if at all possible, to remove so large a population to new locations and return the land to forest. A hopeful suggestion is to modify and cheapen the growing of cotton within the frame of experience and technical ability of the people now growing it, and find a use for it other than the making of cotton textiles.

**Demand for Cellulose**

There is a demand for alpha-cellulose now supplied by processing the tree growths, spruce, poplar and pine, the hardwoods being unsuitable for commercial production. The cotton plant is par excellence a cellulose producer, and now being an annual (although originally a perennial tree growth), it should have advantages over the tree growths. Cotton linters have been and are used for making certain cellulose products and a fairly large literature testified to the possible use of the stems for this purpose.

Briefly, it is proposed to grow the cotton in such manner as to omit part of the cultural operations and the picking of the lint; to harvest the "whole cotton" by mowing it a few inches from the ground: to recover the oil from the seeds, and to obtain alpha-cellulose from the residue, by an appropriate method of processing or pulping. Many difficulties promptly appeared and others developed as the proposal has been studied but not one that is insurmountable or of a serious inhibitive character.

Nicholas W. Dockery, then a student at the University of North Carolina, undertook, in 1929, some pioneer experiments at his mother's plantation in Richmond County, North Carolina, about four miles south of Rockingham. He established a small laboratory there, but the major part of the laboratory work has been done in the university's laboratory at Chapel Hill.

Helpful suggestions and encouragement came from E. E. Hall, director of the Pee Dee Station, near Florence, a branch of the South Carolina State Experiment Station. Mr. Hall had experience in broadcasting cotton, a method we greatly desired testing.

**Changing the Plant**

The guiding principle in our experimental work is a biological one. By crowding and starving a growing organism, especially a growing plant, the adolescent period is shortened and maturity attained earlier and more sharply defined. Obviously, the procedure may be overdone, and how far one can go in this direction advantageously requires study and a discriminating judgment.

In this investigation we have not been concerned with the length of fiber, nor, primarily, with yield per acre, nor size of plant. We have been greatly concerned with a ripening of a maximum number of bolls at one time and a maximum production of cellulose or oil or both, per dollar invested, allowing a reasonable rent for use of the land. Present indications are that this may be met by a small sized plant, with rather spindly stem growth, and a large development of seed and lint.

For instance, the variety, Dixie Triumph, normally produces an extra large plant, with bolls ripening over a period of three months, and requiring three or more pickings.

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Protection from dust and dirt may prove essential. It may be noted here that practically all leaves had fallen from the plants in handling them between the field and gin house. This loss appears inescapable, but without significance, since the dried leaves have been shown to be a very small percentage of the whole plant.

Some of this first harvest was used in experiments to separate the seeds from the rest of the plant. It was found that by first putting the material through a feed chopper to cut the stems into the lengths of a few inches, and then feeding the chopped product to the gin, a good segregation of lint could be obtained, and a fair separation of seeds.

After a few laboratory experiments, we abandoned a suggestion that the oils could be recovered as soaps formed in digesting the whole cotton with alkalis. It now appears the recovery can be accomplished satisfactorily and economically by extraction with an appropriate solvent.

The following year, 1930, with a small grant from the Cotton Growers Co-operative Association, systematic experiments were inaugurated. Plots were planted with different spacings between rows, and later thinnings or "chopping" as it is locally known left selected spacings in different rows. A broadcast plot was early a failure and abandoned. Planting was done with a horse drawn seeder. At first, the seeds were delinted by treating with concentrated sulphuric acid, an efficient but messy operation. Probably germination was improved thereby.

Later the seeder became available for which it was not necessary to delint the seeds. Most of the planting was with Coker No. 5, a locally popular variety. But there was some planting with Dixie Triumph and one or two other varieties. The Dixie Triumph plantings were of special interest, since, as noted above, the plant is usually a large one, but under the conditions of our experiment it made a much smaller growth with a relatively large yield of lint cotton.

It appeared evident the cultivation we desired could be effected satisfactorily with a harrow. But no such instrument being available, we perforce had to be satisfied with somewhat haphazard chopping. Although in some rows there was more or less thinning all rows were badly crowded according to local standards and disaster confidently anticipated.

The plots were fertilized with the rest of the plantation, even to the usual late top dressing of sodium nitrate. From our point of view this was not desirable, as we did not wish to induce continued growth of stem and leaf. There was no poisoning or treating with calcium arsenate, as harvesting was done before weevil infestation became serious in that territory.

**Harvested at 27 Weeks**

Twenty-seven weeks after planting, field observations and laboratory checks showing the plants had come to a "steady state," they were harvested, being cut by a mule-drawn hay mower. No real difficulties developed, though a resetting of blades and minor adjustments would probably have increased the efficiency of the instrument.

After drying on the ground for 48 hours, the harvest was carried to the ginhouse and baled. The following year a similar program was attempted, with an added effort to obtain reliable cost data.

Closely concordant physical results were obtained. Improvements in techniques were made, particularly in harvesting. The mowed plants were fed to a movable hay baler which ran along the rows, and the bales weighing approximately 125 pounds were tied with wire. The saving over straps and burlaps was important, as well as the cost of hauling. The great advantage was a more convenient sized bale when it was handled.

The following year, with Mr. Dockery personally managing the plantation and directing the experimental plots, satisfactory results seemed assured. But the AAA officials ordered the plots plowed under. Protest and plea won sufficient sympathy to have the matter referred to Washington, but, in due course, the plots were plowed under. The following year, 1933, permission to plant for experimental purposes was not obtained in time to plant, and no attempts were made in 1935. This year, 1936, an extensive assembly of plots has been planted at the Dockery plantation, and it is hoped to have definite data from the work there.

It is, we think, very desirable to have observations made at least three other locations, and by professional agriculturists. It could be done readily enough if we were able to offer financial support. We have had numerous offers of co-operation from private individuals, but usually with a string tied to the offer. Usually we are expected to guarantee sale of the crop, or to build a rayon plant on the property.

A definite contribution of the past year has been the discovery that the dried whole cotton can be efficiently and economically pulverized in a mill of the hammer type. The product is then in admirable shape for extraction with organic solvents, and the extracted residue for pulping with alkali solutions. The cost of pulverizing should compare favorably with the cost of barking and chipping the commercial woods.

The work so far has shown that wide variations in yields may be expected, depending upon the character of the planting, row-spacing, etc., cultivation and fertilizing, and very much on the type of cotton used. With Dixie Triumph about 4,000 pounds of dried plant per acre was obtained, but records of about 10,000 pounds have been reported.

We have not yet experimented with varieties of large growth, and we are unable to predict what is to be expected from them if grown under the conditions we have imposed. Probably, heavy yields, that is exceeding 5,000-6,000 pounds, cannot be anticipated without standard fertilizing and cultivation. But the smaller yields will be more than offset by the savings in fertilizer purchases and elimination of labor in chopping and picking.

Moreover, costs computed for cellulose production alone would be quite fallacious since the value of the oil recovered is relatively large. Extraction with solvents will probably yield larger quantities than does pressing, but we know too little as yet to justify definite statements.

Mr. Dockery analyzed the cotton plant during growth over a period of two years. He found the most striking features to be close concordance of the results for the two years. Moisture content reached a maximum at about the fourteenth week of growth in both years and then fell off rapidly until it reached a minimum and constant value at the twenty-fifth week. The ash content diminished steadily while the content of fats and resins (ether-alcohol extract) and total cellulose increased until a maximum was reached at about the twenty-fifth week.

An examination of the growing plants showed at this stage that a preponderant number of bolls appeared ripe. The cotton was harvested in September just after the twenty-seventh week in 1930, and the twenty-fifth week in 1931. A further advantage in this early harvesting was escape from boll weevil infestation.

Mr. Dockery also prepared from whole cotton some excellent pure white samples of alpha-cellulose suitable for making rayon. Mr. Edward J. Egan studied cellulose from whole cotton, spruce, poplar and pine, with results favorable to cotton. Dr. J. P. Saunders made X-ray studies on cellulose from various sources, as did Dr. A. T. Clifford, using a microscope equipped with a Spierer lens, Dr. Alfred R. Macormac extracted clear oils and waxes from the whole cotton plant with benzine and prepared a pulp suitable for making paper. Mr. David Milne extracted oil and wax from the cotton plant by using carbon tetrachloride.

The work, thus far, we regard as exploratory. We think we have shown a probability that the cotton plant can be grown and processed for the recovery of oil and production of alpha-cellulose economically and it would be the salvation of a large agricultural population.

We do not think we have proved it. We have, of course, at every step in the work, given consideration to quantitive results and especially costs. We think that the conclusions reached tentatively are significant and favorable. We think, however, that it would be unwise, possibly harmful, to make them available for quotation.

We think the investigation has now reached the stage when valid figures should be obtained. We know what to do, we know where the necessary personnel and material equipment can be obtained. What is needed and what we have not had so far is financial support.

If the ultimate results will be what we anticipate, the cost of the investigation will be trivial. If, on the other hand, the final judgment will be that it is impracticable, that will fully justify the cost of removing it definitely from consideration and concentrating attention elsewhere. Needless to say, we refuse to be discouraged.

**PRESS**

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6/26/36

**Trend of White Tenancy.**

Discussing agriculture, the Democratic platform declares that "we recognize the evils of farm tenacy" and promises measures which will promote farm ownership and independence for individual farmers.

Recent studies have caused the leaders of many southern states to re-examine the problem of tenacy and share-cropping. For years it was believed that since most of the tenants and share-croppers were negroes, lacking resources and experience needed for farm ownership, nothing could be gained from promoting ownership.

Rupert Vance, in a study issued by the University of North Carolina for the Institute of Social Science, shows that the negro no longer furnishes the bulk of the cotton tenants. There are more than 1,091,000 white tenants in the South, and 698,000 negro tenants.

Furthermore, the trend of white tenacy is upward. From 1920 to 1930, according to Vance, negro tenants in the South decreased by about 2,000, while white tenants increased by more than 200,000.

During the past week, figures released in Washington reveal that in per capita wealth, per capita tax-paying power and per capita purchasing, Louisiana ranks distressingly near the bottom among the states.

There is no reason why the problems disclosed in those figures should not be attacked directly. For our own part, we believe that such a direct attack would be in complete harmony with the wishes of the people of the state.

In the field of industry, legislation enacted at the current session in Baton Rouge is designed to stimulate the use of natural resources and add to industrial activity. But for agriculture, there must be reliance upon federal policies, because of the interstate nature of all farm production.

We believe that what the Roosevelt administration proposes in respect to farm tenacy and share-cropping may prove to have vital significance in the strengthening of Louisiana's agricultural structure. If the state is to move forward, that is one field in which there must be material progress.

Agriculture - 1936
Condition of.

General.

**OUR ONE-CROP BURDEN**

What one-cropism has done to the South is an old story, but it has not yet been repeated often enough. The most recent man of weight to emphasize the evil is David E. Lilienthal, director of TVA, who a few days ago addressed the graduating class of the University of Alabama.

"Cotton has cost you heavily," asserted Mr. Lilienthal. "As everyone knows, you have been forced to sell cotton on the competitive world market, while things that you used you have had to buy on a protected market.

"That produced a deficit. The deficit has not always been apparent, but it has been very real and has been mounting steadily. You have not only exported cotton; you have exported, in the cotton seed, the wealth of your soil fertility. You have had to meet the deficit out of your capital, the soil, the very basis of your life."

Montgomery Advertiser

Mr. Lilienthal said that he believes the adjustment in agriculture was rapidly on the way.

"In this development, your universities, and your State and national governments are beginning to meet the responsibilities of leadership," he affirmed.

More important than agricultural adjustment, said Mr. Lilienthal, is development of industry integrated with agriculture. The beginning has already been made.

Montgomery Ala.
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Commenting on the address The Anniston Star says:

"But Mr. Lilienthal showed that the best industrial research has concentrated on industrial opportunities of the Northeastern section of the country. This is true because income, which supports research, has followed the 70 per cent of the nation's manufacturing which the Northeast has always had.

"The need, therefore, is for business and the technical research institutions of the South to find means of focusing brains and technical facilities on the South's industrial opportunities. One example of this is found in Dr. Charles Herty's experiments with pine, which soon will result in a Southern newsprint industry. Professor Carver at Tuskegee Institute has contributed extensively and materially to the increment of wealth in the South.

"Southern agriculture, however, can apply proven experiments that will increase the wealth of this section many fold. It can be done by the extensive use of legumes and soil conservation efforts, coupled with a diversified "live at home" program by which the farmer produces instead of purchases food and feed for his family and stock.

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**LANDLORDS AND TENANTS**

In recent endeavors to call to the attention of the public the status of tenants and share-croppers and the crying need of finding some means of combatting the economic disease of tenancy, the impression may have been created that the plight of the tenant is the result of oppression on the part of landlords.

Advertiser

Such is not the case.

Landowners have been the victims of a system over which they had no control.

5/21/36

We doubt that in Alabama today there is a landlord who has, since 1928, earned as much as six per cent or a "fair" return on his investment—regardless of whether he treated his tenants fairly.

Montgomery Ala.

It has not been a matter of the landlords taking more than their equal share—the fact is that there just hasn't been anything to divide. The South might just as well realize now that there is never going to be a great deal to divide again as far as cottton is concerned. The landlords may have made big profits when cotton was selling for 20 and 25 cents a pound, but who would say with certainty that cotton will ever be worth 20 or even 15 cents a pound again? Synthetic substitutes and increasing foreign competition may make it impossible for cotton to go beyond 12 cents a pound.

The landlords who made profits when cotton was selling at 15 cents a pound found themselves hard-pressed to pay taxes when cotton dropped to five cents. One could find many inspiring examples throughout Alabama of landlords who were driven into bankruptcy because they continue to advance food and supplies to their tenants in the lean years.

All landowners are not upright, considerate men; but all tenants are not deserving men who are due consideration.

Many landlords in Alabama are not landlords by choice. Individuals, banks and insurance companies own land that they would gladly part with if they could get back the investment it represents. Many have foreclosed unwillingly. They don't want the land—they merely seek to recoup their losses.

No one could expect these "reluctant" landlords to give their lands away. No one can blame them for hiring tenants to work the land. In fact, they would be condemned if they refused to hire tenants.

Both landlords and tenants are victims of a system over which they have had no control. The system reaches back to the Reconstruction. It has been aggravated by a number of circumstances. The small, independent farmers of the South have had no estates to leave their children. There has not been enough land to divide, and many sons, lacking any other means of earning a livelihood have been forced to become tenants. As for the sons of tenants and share-croppers, they have neither education nor legacy.

Whatever the causes and circumstances, tenancy has increased. Today 64 per cent of the farmers in Alabama are tenants or share-croppers. Tenancy is a threat to democracy. It is a threat to standards of wages, education and culture

Col. Harry M. Ayers, publisher of The Anniston Star, quotes Arthur Young, the British economist who, writing of the improved status of the French tenant shortly after the Revolution, said:

"Give a man the secure possession of a bleak rock, and he will convert it into a garden; give him a nine years' lease of a garden, and he will convert it into a desert."

This has been found to be literally true in the South where once fertile lands have washed away, "worked to death", or otherwise deteriorated—all because tenants had no permanent interest in the land they tilled.

Since individuals are powerless to combat the system as such, the fight on tenancy must remain the responsibility of the government. Other governments, notably Denmark and England, have already demonstrated that governmental action can be successful.

The advocates of the Bankhead-Jones bill do not propose that tenants shall be given lands and equipment by the government. The bill merely provides that the government shall act as an intermediary between the man who needs land and the man who has money to lend. No landowner would be forced to sell against his will. Tenants after demonstration, themselves capable of controlling their own affairs would be given an opportunity to purchase lands over a long period of time.

The Bankhead-Jones bill potentially would benefit the South more than any other phase of the New Deal program. Why does the South not take an interest in its enactment?

# Aid For Ark. Share Croppers Asked By Eddy

Journal & Guide

## Needs $17,000 To Buy Mississippi Farm For Workers

5-16-36

NEW YORK CITY— An appeal for funds with which to purchase a huge farm in Mississippi to furnish homes for evicted Arkansas sharecroppers, was made this week by Sherwood Eddy, famous author and lecturer who recently made a survey of conditions in the stricken areas.

Norfolk Va.

Donations of any amount are asked to be forwarded to room 704, 347 Madison Avenue, New oYrk City, to Mr. Eddy, who is acting as treasurer of the fund.

Describing the farm which has been selected for the impoverished share-croppers, Mr. Eddy writes: "It's the best buy in the South—an ideal place. We found 2,158 acres of the richest black cotton soil in the Mississippi delta, 600 acres ready for the plow, 160 acres of the best cypress timber for building houses, $7,500 worth of property, including nine houses, a valuable tractor, two wagons, twelve mules, one saddle horse, a blacksmith shop, barn, farm implements.

**OWNER NEEDED CASH**

The absentee owner was hard-up for cash. He consented to part with the land at the unbelievable price of $5 an acre, although when cleaned it will be as good as the adjoining land which is worth $70 an acre. We can have the whole place with all the property if we can provide $17,500 in cash within 30 days."

The plan is to purchase the farm with donations from interested persons. It will be operated as a cooperative enterprise. Earnings from the farm will be used to found others, according to Mr. Eddy.

In his plea for funds, the noted lecturer writes: "The whole situation is full of possibilities for good or evil—on the one hand, peonage, serfdom, poverty, disease, robbery, eviction and violence; on the other, a cooperative commonwealth to guarantee the rights of the constitution and the Declaration of Independence to the Negroes and poor whites.

**RIGHT OPPORTUNITY**

We have heard much of cooperatives lately from Kagawa and in Sweden and Denmark. Is not this the right opportunity for most of us to give expression to our convictions and put our theories in practice?

"The deepest need I know in our own country, the greatest oppression and degradation of life, is just now among these suffering share-croppers. Here also is one of the areas where fascism will probably first seek to seize power. I have seldom in recent years made any appeal for funds but I cannot forbear writing now because the need is so desperate."

Agriculture - 1936
Condition of.

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Norfolk Va.

Donations of any amount are asked to be forwarded to room 704, 347 Madison Avenue, New oYrk City, to Mr. Eddy, who is acting as treasurer of the fund.

Describing the farm which has been selected for the impoverished share-croppers, Mr. Eddy writes: "It's the best buy in the South—an ideal place. We found 2,158 acres of the richest black cotton soil in the Mississippi delta, 600 acres ready for the plow, 160 acres of the best cypress timber for building houses, $7,500 worth of property, including nine houses, a valuable tractor, two wagons, twelve mules, one saddle horse, a blacksmith shop, barn, farm implements.

### OWNER NEEDED CASH

The absentee owner was hard-up for cash. He consented to part with the land at the unbelievable price of $5 an acre, although when cleaned it will be as good as the adjoining land which is worth $70 an acre. We can have the whole place with all the property if we can provide $17,500 in cash within 30 days."

The plan is to purchase the farm with donations from interested persons. It will be operated as a cooperative enterprise. Earnings from the farm will be used to found others, according to Mr. Eddy.

In his plea for funds, the noted lecturer writes: "The whole situation is full of possibilities for good or evil—on the one hand, peonage, serfdom, poverty, disease, robbery, eviction and violence; on the other, a cooperative commonwealth to guarantee the rights of the constitution and the Declaration of Independence to the Negroes and poor whites.

### RIGHT OPPORTUNITY

We have heard much of cooperatives lately from Kagawa and in Sweden and Denmark. Is not this the right opportunity for most of us to give expression to our convictions and put our theories in practice?

"The deepest need I know in our own country, the greatest oppression and degradation of life, is just now among these suffering share-croppers. Here also is one of the areas where fascism will probably first seek to seize power. I have seldom in recent years made any appeal for funds but I cannot forbear writing now because the need is so desperate."

# Cotton Growing South Faces Its Opportunity

The south, unless all signs fail and all the analysts and prognosticators ars wrong, is due to be the scene of an increasing expansion of activity within the next few years.

The fact is explicable on the ground of natural resources and physical conditions that cannot be gainsaid or overlooked and which carry the possibility of the production of wealth under circumstances more favorable in many ways than those that prevail in many other areas.

These natural advantages of the south are too many and in many cases too obvious to need any attention directed to them or any explanation made of them except for the fact that familiarity does breed a sort of contempt or disregard.

In the first place, the mere item of climate alone gives the south potentialities that few other sections of the country enjoy. That is to say, the growing season down here is far longer than it is in most other portions of our nation. The soil of the south, properly managed, may bring forth more than one useful, profitable crop in a season and at the same time increase in fertility and power.

The climate likewise makes it possible to effect economies in the building of industrial plants without affecting their efficiency and suitability. The same thing is true in the construction of residences for labor, and all that coupled with proximity to raw materials makes up a combination that is unbeatable from every angle.

The problem of living well is potentially simpler in the south, too, than in many other parts of the world, for the man with a little ground at his disposal can feed himself in large measure for a considerable part of the year by his own efforts. That means that the south offers an extraordinarily fine field for the development of decentralization in industry with its avoidance of the evils of factory districts, tenement houses, and the like. There are in the south any number of communities where an industrial enterprise can be started and operated with excellent opportunity for division of labor between field and factory.

As a matter of fact, of course, one whose memory serves for 20 or 25 years can see before him today the extent to which industry of many sorts has trended southward. The textile business is perhaps the one outstanding example, though there are many others. The extent of that trend in time and quantity would appear limited only by the needs of the American people, but the quality and satisfaction of it are things that will be better or worse according to the foresight and intelligence with which we plan and prepare.

The Mid-South has in the past depended on cotton to an extent that has been hurtful always and all but ruinous at times. The movement toward diversified farming to live at home is gaining strength steadily and its virtues and values are apparent. For all that, however, the fact is that cotton must be the mainstay for a money crop for some time to come unless changes and adjustments in our whole mode of life are to be too sudden and too violent for comfort.

It is in that field that opportunities lie open today that are not being taken advantage of as speedily and energetically as it would seem the probabilities suggest. Prediction is entirely safe only after the event, to be sure, but there is certainly sound reason to believe that the foreign market for American cotton, now restricted, may never be as wide as it has been in other days. There is the lively chance, at least, that still further contractions will be in evidence.

If the foregoing be true, or whether it is or not, the south would do exceedingly well to establish and maintain facilities for intensive research in the hunt for new and better uses for cotton. It is true that such work is being well and profitably done already in certain fields, but it is obvious that a project covering the entire range of cotton and its products would almost certainly mean the basic firming of the whole business of producing, processing and selling cotton. It is logical for every reason, too, to suggest that Memphis is the ideal spot for the location of such an undertaking.

It is not alone in the case of cotton, however, that the south could and should plan along scientific lines to develop the fullest possible values for the future. Opportunity knocks at many doors.

**ON BEHALF OF THE FARMERS**

To The Commercial Appeal:

On behalf of the farmers of Tipton County I desire to thank you for so forcefully taking to task Senator McKellar for his vigorous attack on the Cotton Co-operative Association. While I do not belong to the organization, I think his charge uncalled for and very unjust. I am one of the largest growers of cotton in our county and sell cotton to the independent buyers and the co-ops also, to the one paying the best price. Covington never had a cotton classer until the co-ops furnished one without charge. The tenants, both white and colored, can have their cotton classed now, know the quality and price they should receive. This has given us a better market and price for cotton. I have been a loyal supporter of the senator and esteem him highly. Our farmers think he is wrong in this matter and is against our interest. If he will join Senator Bankhead in his endeavor to ascertain who caused the two-cent break in the cotton market in one day, causing the $10 per bale loss to the holders of cotton and the gambler to pocket thousands of dollars that he never earned, then he will be a real benefactor to us farmers who labor to grow cotton. When men through the Cotton Exchange can manipulate such a deal the exchange ceases to be a help to the raisers of cotton and becomes a flagrant, gambling curse. We hope our senator will join Senator Bankhead in making the Cotton Exchange function as a clean business institution and not a device for a few to gamble in.

We appreciate Mr. George Morris' editorial, "Tenant and Landlord." He knows the facts and plainly stated them. The Commercial Appeal has been a potential force in aiding and encouraging farmers to better their condition. We rejoice in the fact that it still has such forceful editors on the staff.

J. R. HALL.

Covington, Tenn.

# BALANCED CROP PLAN CALLED TENANT HOPE

Commercial Appeal

## Cobb Tells Ministers How to Better Farmer's Status

6-27-36

## COTTON TOO UP AND DOWN

Memphis Tenn.

**Those Who Have Tried to Buy Land After Good Years Often Lost on Price Fluctuations**

By The Associated Press

STATE COLLEGE, Miss., June 26.—Cully A. Cobb, southern division director of the farm administration, told a conference of rural ministers here today the rural south's "most pressing social problem" arose out of tenancy.

Cobb said "spiritual values and economic questions are closely related," and added:

"You have seen the effect of poverty upon wide areas; wide areas with fertile soil and great natural advantages. You have seen its effect translated into terms of shiftlessness, ignorance and disease. Few individuals and few sections have the strength or the character to endure poverty over a long period without sinking downward."

**Traces Back to Slavery**

The tenant system in the south, he said, "traces back to slavery, reconstruction, the ups and downs of cotton, the lack of opportunity, to the niggardliness of agricultural income."

The severe fluctuations in cotton prices from year to year, Cobb said, hampered efforts of tenants to become farm owners because those "who purchased land following seasons when the price of cotton enabled them to make a little money, lost what they invested in subsequent seasons of low prices."

Cobb said approximately 34 per cent of the country's farm population lived in nine southern states, but this section received only 22 per cent of the nation's farm income. Even in 1919, he said, when the cotton farmer received his highest cash income in the last 50 years, the average gross cash income of families cultivating cotton was only about $1,000.

He termed "an adequate and stable farm income" essential for a solution of the tenant problem, and said "if we in the south balance our production with demand, and diversify our crops, we will have taken a long stride toward a fair return for the cotton farmer."

**AAA Given Defense**

Cobb took issue with "those persons who make the AAA a target for attack," and said impartial studies by the Brookings Institute and other agencies refuted the charge tenants suffered under the AAA program.

"At the risk of being adjudged provincial," he added, "I would like to say also that unwarranted agitation by outside groups will only create feeling that will delay a sane and sensible program for agricultural recovery here in the cotton belt.

"I have often wondered why so many people who can not solve the pressing social problems that are all around them at home, feel so entirely capable of telling the south exactly what to do and exactly how to do it. Our problems are tough and brutally real, and their solution will require infinite patience and time. Neither emotionalism nor radicalism will make them disappear. They require more than good intentions."

**FINANCING A TENANCY PROGRAM**

In a discussion of the plank of the Democratic platform relating to farm tenancy, The Mobile Register said recently:

"It must be admitted that the program called for in the Bankhead bill would be an enormously costly undertaking. Its chief weakness, perhaps, is that it throws the burden of abolishing, or decreasing, farm tenancy wholly on the government. There is no reason why this should be so. The States, after all, particularly our own Southern States, should assume a portion of the responsibility."

The Register correctly contends that the States as well as the Federal government must assume joint responsibility in attempting a solution of the tenancy problem.

However, the financing of a program such as embodied in the Bankhead bill can best be handled by the Federal government. Even so the burden would not be borne entirely by the Federal government. Instead it would act as an intermediary and guarantor between the tenant and private capital. Of the billion dollars to be expended the Federal government would directly appropriate only fifty millions. The bulk of the money would be raised through the medium of a bond issue through a corporation similar to the Home Owners Loan Corporation.

The States can be helpful in reducing tenancy by passing laws encouraging small, independent farm owners.

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# Rural Newspapers and Editors Of South Have Bright Future, Declares Noted Commentator

## Nixon Finds Country Editors More Alive to Social Trends Than Some of City Cousins.

*Editor's note: H. C. Nixon, who has contributed before to this column, is head of the department of history and political science at Tulane University, New Orleans, a member of the regional committee for the south of the Social Science Research Council; a member of the executive council of the American Political Science Association, and chairman of the southern policy committee. Dr. Nixon was with the Wilson peace commission at Paris in 1919, and has written numerous books and contributed to national and regional magazines. The views expressed in the following article are those of the writer, and are not necessarily those of The Constitution.*

**By H. C. NIXON.**

The rural press of the south is more important than that of any other section except the west. The south has hundreds more weekly newspapers than has New England or the middle Atlantic states or the middle west, and the southern rural press, in the broad sense, also includes many dailies published in small cities or large towns serving a reading constituency of farmers.

Many of these papers are thriving. "How is your circulation?" I recently asked a staff member of one of them. The answer was, "An all-time high." The decline in the number of rural papers has been something like the decline in the number of metropolitan papers: a reduction through consolidation or combinations which has not cut down the number or importance of newspaper centers. And the reduction of the number of metropolitan papers has been a godsend to the rural press because it has cut down the number of big city papers competing for the farmers' attention and has created more room for country newspapers. Furthermore, the country newspaper serves a reading public more vitally interested than ever in discussion of political and economic issues and adult education.

**RURAL AT HEART**

The rural press in the south has always been able to make human appeal without resort to sob stuff or sport page extravaganza. Joel Chandler Harris, Bill Arp, Ed Howe, William Allen White and the late editor of the Dahlonega (Ga.) Nugget might be regarded as country editors who achieved distinction by sticking to the lore of the soil. Mankind may today be cultivating an urban sophistication, but most of us are still rural at heart. There is more meaning for us still in expressions like "the hind tit" than was ever dreamt of in city philosophy. It would be well for the gentlemen of the rural press to realize even more fully that the roots of our culture are rural and that these roots should not be neglected. Sherwood Andersoon seems to have proved this point by his success with rural publishing in Virginia.

Many editors of southern country papers are more alive to significant social trends than are some of their city cousins who are experts in the newspaper game. In some ways we have had a surplus of experts, of analysts, so to speak, and are now in urgent need of perspective and synthesis in our discussion and treatment of the events of the day. The informed country editor may lead the city expert in this service of philosophical interpretation. I meet country editors who are wide readers and who can converse with force and intelligence on the signs of the times. Would that they might put more of their strong conversation in their papers.

**COUNTRY EDITORS INFORMED**

A country editor, recently imported into a political science conference with which I was connected, stacked up like a brain-truster and at the same time had more practical experience to draw on than had the professors. The most interesting non-news columns of certain city papers are those which reprint or summarize the columns of rural editors. A man who has studied or taught in three or four universities in following out his interest in the history of ideas once told me he got the inspiration for his career from reading editorials in a certain country town daily.

There are, of course, too many "weak sisters" in southern rural journalism, but it is encouraging to note healthy examples of strong, well-edited papers. May their tribe increase. Our rural districts need more good editors, just as they need more good physicians.

It is stimulating to pass in review the different regional farm papers of the south. Though issued generally from our largest cities, these publications are part of our rural press from the point of view of the readers they seek to serve. The land of Dixie has had strong agricultural journals for more than 100 years. Edmund Ruffin, of Virginia and South Carolina, was one of a group of vigorous farm editors and agricultural reformers of the old south. They brought about more scientific improvement in agriculture than is generally realized. But unfortunately their appeal was to a limited group, and their work was sidetracked by the controversies leading up to the Civil War and by the war itself.

**BETTER FARMING GOSPEL.**

The southern agricultural press of the 20th century has little danger of being sidetracked, and it is making a widely democratic appeal. Its total circulation runs far above a million, and more than one journal can boast of hundreds of thousands of readers. This wide appeal suggests either an agricultural renaissance in the south or a widespread spirit of critical concern—perhaps both.

The agricultural press and the farm pages of many dailies are carrying far the gospel of better farming, of soil conservation, and of crop diversification. They are passing on to the farm public the valuable information concerning agriculture made available by the far-flung agencies of the national Department of Agriculture and the agricultural colleges and stations of the south. They are touching on social and economic problems of the farmers, on the problems of farm organizatiois and co-operation.

But, with a few excellent exceptions, our farm papers and farm pages have slighted a set of underlying problems which must be faced if southern farmers, in the large, are to be saved or removed from peasantry. The ills of farm tenancy in the south, the disparity between agriculture and manufacturing under the prevailing industrial tariff system, the undue burden of taxation oppressing farmers—these are among questions which the agricultural press should hit hard and hit constantly until we reach genuine solutions, solutions which are not makeshifts. The agricultural south must produce more, get more, consume more, and divide it better, if the rural south is to come into its proper heritage. Our farm press should go in more strongly than ever for such a program and policy.

**FEWER HANDICAPS.**

The farm press and the whole rural press of the south have not the handicaps of the urban press, which may be forced by a miseducated public to publish what that public wants. An old farmer of my native community once called at the office of "his paper" in the largest city in the southeast and, complaining that all the news being published was bad news, asked why they did not print some good news. He got the rather superficial answer that all news was bad news—that if it was good, it was not news. Rural southerns, men and women, want gossip, but they will relish good news if they can get it. They will stand for an abundance of serious matter, provided it is humanized and set forth with punch and power. They like their editorials and their coffee strong.

Two important developments seem likely to affect favorably the policies, status and importance of the rural press—the radio and the physical decentralization of industry. The radio may reduce the importance of the press as a medium of communicating red-hot "spot news," for the radio can get there first. The newspaper must come along with comment, explanation and interpretation, a more important job, which in recent years has been largely neglected because of the emphasis on spot news. The rural press can hold its own with the urban press in such humanized comment, especially for appeal to rural readers.

The physical decentralization of industry, made possible by cheap transportation, cheap power, and various mechanical aids, and made necessary by population problems, will probably give us in the future a balance between industry and agriculture in nearly every community. That balance will give support to the local press here and there and everywhere.

The rural newspaper and the rural editor in the south have a future.

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**WORK OF H. C. NIXON IS IN LIBRARY HERE**

"I'll Take My Stand; the South and the Agrarian Tradition" is a symposium published in 1931, to which 12 southerners contributed their views on the traditional southern mode of life. H. Clarence Nixon's chapter in this volume is called "Whither Southern Economy?" The Carnegie Library of Atlanta has "I'll Take My Stand" in its collection.

Chattanooga, Tenn. Times
March 27, 1936

## THE PROBLEM OF TENANCY.

The system of farm tenancy in the South constitutes one of the Nation's gravest social and economic problems. Embraced in that system are an estimated 8,500,000 people, of whom only about one-third are Negroes. They live in the cotton belt, which extends 300 miles north and south and stretches 1,600 miles from the Carolinas to Western Texas. More than 60 per cent. of all those engaged in the production of cotton are tenants of a sort. A searching analysis of the system is contained in an article entitled, "Southern Farm Tenancy," which Edwin R. Embree, President of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, contributes to the March issue of Survey Graphic Magazine. Of a group which constitutes 7 per cent. of the total population, Mr. Embree writes:

> The cultural landscape of the cotton belt is a miserable panorama of unpainted shacks, rain-gullied fields, straggling fences, dirt, poverty, disease, drudgery, monotony. Submerged beneath the system which he supports, the cotton tenant's standard of living approaches the level of bare animal existence. The traditional standards of the slave required only subsistence. The cotton slave—white or colored—has inherited a role in which comfort, education, and self-development have no place. For the type of labor he performs, all that is actually required is a stomach indifferently filled, a shack to sleep in, some old jeans to cover his nakedness.

The foregoing picture of the tenant farmer is not advanced by Mr. Embree as a personal indictment. He believes the case against the system "cannot be rested on any personal indictment of landlords any more than it can be vindicated by stories of the improvidence of tenants." He believes that landlords generally "act as they find it necessary to act under the system," and that tenants do likewise. He emphasizes that because of the migration of Negroes to the North the tenant problem is becoming an increasingly white problem. And he sees the problem as a continuing one, although he believes that King Cotton may be doomed, not only because of "unsound credit and an inhuman system," but also because of the loss of soil fertility, the loss of world markets and competing fabrics.

An ideal solution of the problem, Mr. Embree believes, would be to transform the present tenants and sharecroppers into independent landowners. He is convinced, as are other students of farm problems in the South, that only Government funds and Government direction can supply a new distribution of farm ownership. How the distribution is to be made remains one of

the most serious concerns of those who advocate a new system. The Federal Government's Re-Homesteading Project has made some progress in establishing farm ownership. But the problem has only been touched on. As a matter of fact, it is only in the recent past that the system of farm tenancy has been revealed as one which threatens to hold back the progress of the entire country. Even agriculture is not a national problem within the meaning of the Constitution if it is no longer possible to contend successfully that the entire population is not seriously affected by the conditions which exist among so large an element which continues to live, as Mr. Embree asserts, in "desperate conditions bordering on peonage."

Charleston, S. C. News & Courier
March 2[illegible], 1936

## Government Exploits Farmers

Congressmen, legislators, politicians, will tell farmers that government will "even up" things for them by giving them subsidies. The subsidies won't last. They are a makeshift.

The majority of the voters dwell in great cities and manufacturing towns. Were the farmers—by "farmers" are meant the tenants and share-croppers, hired men, as well as the land-owning employers—paid as much in money as the industrialists and traders are paid, the cost of living in cities and towns would be prohibitive to many workers.

Government collects taxes in country and town in dollars. That means that the countryman must work longer, perhaps twice as long, as the city laborer to get the dollar to pay the gasoline and other taxes.

Indirect taxes are 70 per cent of the federal government's revenues.

The farm subsidies under the Bankhead law and the AAA have helped the employing farmers. No one will dispute that. How much have they helped the share-croppers and the tenants? Are men on the farms working fewer hours?

The federal government is now run primarily for the sake of the cities. Industrial labor is organized. Government's influence is exerted in cooperation with organized labor to raise wages in cities and industrial centers. Farm labor is left to work twelve hours a day because, if it did not, beef, bacon, lamb, milk, poultry, cotton, tobacco would cost more than many city people could pay.

Taking acres of land out of cultivation will not substantially reduce farm production. Intelligent labor on farms can produce as much on twenty-five acres as on fifty. So, farm production will not be reduced unless hours of farm labor be reduced.

As for unintelligent farm labor, if t be prohibited from cultivating large acreages, the labor will not be self-supporting. Your average negro tenant cannot eke out a living unless ~~he is~~ allowed to plant fifteen or twenty acres in cotton to the mule.

New York Evening Post

FEB 12 1936

# Common Misery Crumbles Color Barriers in South

## White Workers Begin to Realize Race Hatred Maintains Cotton Feudalism

*EDITOR'S NOTE.—The great majority of those who live in the cotton belt have as little voice in the press as they have in politics.*

*This series of articles, of which this is the third, does not pretend to be an "impartial" survey. Its author, Howard Kester, is organizer for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and he expresses frankly the point of view of the tenants, croppers and farm laborers his union represents. These include both white and Negro.*

*Mr. Kester is white and a Southerner. He is a native of Virginia. He attended Lynchburg College in Lynchburg, Va., Princeton Theological Seminary and Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn.*

*He traveled widely abroad in 1925 and again in 1932. He was trained for the ministry and as a student preached in the mountains of West Virginia, Virginia and Tennessee.*

*Mr. Kester now lives in Nashville, Tenn. He is a member of the Socialist Party and editor of the Sharecropper, official organ of his union. He was for six years secretary of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.*

*He is the author of "Revolt Among the Sharecroppers," to be published shortly by Covici-Friede.*

By HOWARD KESTER

The color line is beginning to crumble in the South.

White man and black man stand side by side in our union. Their common misery seems far more real to them than a mere difference in the color of their skins.

I myself am a Southerner, but I was trained for the ministry and I never noticed in my Gospel that when Jesus said "suffer little children to come unto Me" he added "but put the black ones in a Jim Crow car."

Furthermore, my forebears were Pennsylvania Quakers. Two of them signed the first protest in America against slavery. Much of what I have seen among the croppers of the cotton belt is worse—more vicious—much more insecure—than slavery.

Race hatred maintains the new feudalism of the cotton belt by dividing poor white from poor Negro.

A committee of Southern educators recently made a survey of "The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy." They concluded: "Because of their insistence upon the degrading of 3,000,000 Negro tenants, 5,500,000 white workers continue to keep themselves in virtual peonage."

**Build a union of white croppers, and the planter will use the blacks as scabs. Build a union of blacks, and the planter will use the white as scabs. Build two unions, Jim Crow style, and the planters will play one against the other. What they fear is a united union of blacks and whites.**

That's exactly what the Southern Tenant Farmers Union is, and that is why the planters fear and hate it as they do.

There were fifteen Negroes among the group of twenty-seven men who met on a hot night in July of 1934 in a dingy schoolhouse just south of Tyronza in Poinsett County, Arkansas. All were either croppers or tenants of that neighborhood, and that night—in the dim light of kerosene lamps—our union was born.

Their main problem was to secure for themselves and their fellow sharecroppers their share of the benefits granted under the AAA contracts. The cotton contracts gave them very little, but even this little was being taken from them by the planters.

Tenants were not getting their parity payments. They were being made to sign papers making the landlords trustees of the cotton-gin certificates. Landlords were evicting croppers and tenants and using day labor instead at starvation wages.

To try to deal individually with the planter meant to take a chance on being "kicked off the place." Most of them had never been in a union, but they knew they had to have one.

The meeting had not been in progress long when the inevitable question, which always rises when Negro and white men come together to consider joint action, arose.

"Are we going to have two unions," some one asked, "one for the whites and one for the colored?"

There was a long silence. Finally, one by one, they began to speak.

One man believed that, since the churches divided the races, maybe the union should do likewise. He wasn't sure, though, for he had noticed that the churches hadn't done very much to help the sharecroppers.

Another observed that a mixed union would be dangerous and that the planters wouldn't stand for it.

An old man with white hair overhanging an ebony face rose to his feet. He had been in unions before, he said. In his seventy years he had seen the Negro build many unions, only to have them broken by the planters and "the law."

He had been a member of the black man's union at Elaine, Ark., and he had seen the union with almost its entire membership wiped ou in the bloody Elaine Massacre of 1919.

**"We colored folks," he said, "can't organize without you, and you white folks can't organize without us."**

**Continuing, he said: "Aren't we all brothers, and ain't God the Father of us all? We live under the same sun, eat the same food, wear the same clothing, work on the same land, raise the same crop for the same landlord, who oppresses and cheats us both.**

"For a long time now the white folks and the colored folks have been fighting each other, and both of us has been getting whipped all the time. We don't have nothing against one another, but we got plenty against the landlord.

"The same chain that holds my people holds your people too. Yet the landlord is always betwixt us, beating us and starving us and makin' us fight each other. There ain't but one way for us to get him where he can't help himself, and that's for us to get together and stay together."

When the old man sat down, the decision had been made. Whites and Negroes were henceforth to work together in the union on an equal plane.

What kind of a union was it to be? That was the next question.

Some of those present at the first meeting had formerly ridden with the Ku Klux Klan. They thought a sort of black-and-white Klan, operating in secret, and riding the roads at night to punish dishonest planters and bosses, would be the right idea.

One of the men had formerly been a member of a Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, and thought it best to have a legal union, operating in the open by peaceful means. His idea carried the little "convention."

A white cropper was elected chairman; a Negro minister vice-chairman. An Englishman who had drifted into the cotton country years before and was now a tenant farmer was chosen secretary. He was the only one there who knew how to keep minutes and had a real hand for writing letters.

They had no money for lawyers, but for advice they turned to H. L. Mitchell and Clay East, two Socialists of Tyronza. Mitchell had a small dry cleaning establishment, but had once been a cropper. East ran a filling station. His father was a small farmer.

Several months before Mitchell, now secretary of the union, brought Norman Thomas down to address an overflow meeting of enraged planters and gaping croppers in the schoolhouse at Tyronza.

So the union was born. There were twenty-seven men at the first meeting. There are 25,000 members now.

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**BIRMINGHAM, ALA.**
**NEWS**

FEB 5 1936

## White Farmers Increase, Negro Farmers Decrease

*The University of North Carolina News Letter* publishes a significant study of trends among white and Negro farmers in its state, as disclosed by the recent census of agriculture. Among the outstanding facts revealed in the census, it notes, are the enormous increase in farms operated by white farmers, and the substantial decrease in farms operated by Negro farmers, since 1930.

During the last five years, it is shown, farms in North Carolina operated by white farmers have increased by 28,759, or 14.2 per cent. During the same period farms operated by Negro farmers decreased by 7,500, or 9.8 per cent. This is the largest increase of white farmers in the recent history of North Carolina, and the largest decrease of Negro farmers; in fact, the only decrease among the latter except a small one during the five years preceding 1930.

The study made by the University of North Carolina publication is of interest to the entire South, because it is quite likely that similar trends among white and Negro farmers have been in progress in other Southern states. If the increase of white farmers and the decrease of Negro farmers have been general throughout the South, the trends are of obvious importance.

"For some time prior to 1925," says the publication, "there was a definite trend towards an increasing ratio of Negro farmers in the state. This may have been due in a large measure to the absorption of whites by our developing industry. Since 1925 there has been a decided decline in the proportion of farms operated by Negro farmers, from 28.3 per cent in 1925 to 23 per cent in 1935. The decline has been due on the one hand to return to the farm on the part of the unemployed and other whites who, by necessity or choice, have gone back to the farm, plus the natural increase of the white farm population, and on the other hand to a change in the status of thousands of Negro farmers from tenants to cash wage hands."

During the last quarter of a century in North Carolina, there has been an increase of nearly 45,000 white farmers, while Negro farmers have increased by only 3,717. The disproportion has developed in the last 10 years, for from 1910 to 1925 there was an increase of almost exactly 15,000 white farmers and 15,000 Negro farmers. Since 1925, there has been an increase of nearly 29,000 white farmers, but a decrease among Negro farmers of 11,593.

It is further shown that practically the entire increase in white farmers has taken place since 1930, and most of the decrease in Negro farmers in the same five years. Since this period coincides with the depression years, the conclusion is inescapable that the depression must have been chiefly responsible for the trends.

After examining the figures by counties, *The News Letter* inquires: "How does one account for the large decrease of farms operated by Negro farmers in the cash-crop belt of the state, while all of these same cash-crop counties except six show an increase of white farmers?" The publication thinks that perhaps the main explanation is that this is a product of the crop adjustment program. "The cash-crop land of the state is owned mainly by white farmers who lease a large part of their holdings to tenants—in the eastern part of the state mainly to Negro tenants. When the cotton and tobacco allotments are made, the agreement is between the government and the owner of the land. What seems to have happened is that several thousand tenants have been changed to cash wage hands, in which case the landlord hires his labor for cash and sells the entire crop himself. It is either this, or the tenants have been dismissed altogether, for the main change in the eastern part of the state has been a loss of Negro cropper tenants. But why has the loss been confined almost altogether to the Negro race? That is a perplexing problem and one that would require a large field study to get the answer."

Other questions arise. "If the 10,000 Negro farmers have been changed to day laborers, what is happening to them when they are not employed between crops? If they have not been changed to day laborers, but have been dismissed altogether, what has become of them? Are they on relief, or have they migrated elsewhere? Frankly we do not know. All we do know is that 10,000 of them are no longer operators of farms, either as owners, or as tenants of any kind."

As *The News Letter* points out, it is gen erally thought that the Negro is peculiarl fitted for agriculture, especially for cotto and tobacco farming. But it is interestin to note that although 28 per cent of Nort Carolina's population is Negro, only 23 pe cent of all farmers in the state now are Ne groes.

"Whether the Negro is better or worse of as a cash wage hand than as a cropper ten ant is another subject," the publication con cludes. "Whether, agriculturally, Nort Carolina is better off with a larger ratio o white farmers, especially in what has lon been the Negro, tenant, cash-crop belt, i also another subject. The last 10-year tren may be temporary. But it has been a nota ble change."

It seems to *The Birmingham News* tha the questions raised by this study are of rea importance and concern to the South, as suming that these trends apply not merel to North Carolina, but to this section as a whole. It may be that the trends have beer more pronounced in that state than in other in the South, because North Carolina is more highly developed industrially than other Southern states, and it is probable that there has been a larger displacement of white workers in industry there, and consequently a greater return of white people to the soil But if there is a general movement of this kind throughout the South, even though to a smaller extent than in North Carolina, i poses a question which is likely to prove serious. If Negroes are losing out on the farms when they are regarded as better suited for agriculture than for other occupations, what become of them? Just now there is no pportunity for anyone to find work in business or industry, and least of all for the Negro.

What can be done to counteract this trend, as it affects Negro farmers, this paper cannot say. Probably no one right now can say what might be done. But it is certainly a question for the serious attention of Southern leaders.

## *Condemns Its Own Baby*

Although The Telegraph for years has been an ardent advocate of Government aid for farmers, it is somewhat shaken by recent disclosures.

According to the fact-finding Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agriculture, the farm income from cotton probably would have been as large in 1934 without Government control as it was under AAA, and might have been larger.

Such is the rather startling statement in a report recently released by the bureau at Washington, which adds that with domestic acreage in check and with cotton at 10 cents a pound or higher, foreign production will continue to increase by 150 thousand bales a year or more, that approximately one million men a year, on an average, were made jobless as cotton farmers in the South by AAA, and that no cash crop can be grown as profitably as cotton on the land taken out of production by a cotton acreage reduction program.

The full report of the bureau has not been received by Georgia newspapers, so far as known, but it is said the results of this searching and impartial enquiry on the part of the long-established bureau were so disturbing to the advocates of crop control that vigorous efforts were made to soften the report and to have many of its conclusions altered. The economic advisers to AAA were particularly vigorous in the effort to substitute their own data for that of the bureau. The department itself is said to have gone so far as to issue, through its press bureau, an alleged summary which those who had seen the full report declared to be "misleading". This summary was headed, "Continued cotton production adjustment needed," although no such statement was made in the body of the report itself. The summary gave the distinct impression that the report supported AAA or something like it, and even conservative officials of the Department of Agriculture charged that attempt was made to give a false impression.

It was charged in the Senate a few days ago that farm income last year from crops that were not under Government control showed an income of 448 million dollars more than in the previous year, while those crops under control, if the benefit payments were deducted, would show a decline in farm income of 84 million dollars compared with the previous year. The figures were said to have been taken from an Agricultural Department report, and presumably this is the report to which reference was made.

The bureau report estimates that the price of cotton in 1934 without AAA would have been 8.75 cents, although AAA officials in the past had said that without control the price would have dropped to five or six cents. Officials of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics admitted that on the basis of their figures it is entirely possible that on a majority of plantations net income from cotton

might have been larger in 1934 without AAA than with it. These conclusions were drawn from the fact that with a larger acreage operating costs per acre would have been reduced and the larger volume would have more than offset the price again under AAA control.

The bureau points out that in 1934 the share croppers in the South would have received

## Mechanization Coming

The report of a survey, made by a University of Arkansas professor, showing the increasing mechanization of cotton plantations in that state, is not surprising.

At the same time, the findings are illuminating with respect to what is slowly, gradually taking place in the production of cotton, the South's main crop.

Dr. H. W. Blalock found that "thousands of Arkansas tenants and sharecroppers will be displaced within a few seasons by the rapid trend toward complete mechanization of the South's largest cotton plantations."

The trend toward extensive use of machinery, he found, is greatest in the Delta and the Red River bottoms in Arkansas.

"Nearly two out of every three cotton plantations in Arkansas are now using tractors", he declared. "The plantations that do not use tractors for cultivation are turning to mechanization by the use of team-powered machines, multi-row cultivators, and in many other ways."

Out of 100 cotton plantation records studied, he found that the plantation, which produced the greatest net return on investment from farm operations in 1934, was one that was completely mechanized.

Charts to show how mechanization has cut the cost of producing cotton also were shown in his study.

For instance, one plantation's records showed that cotton had been made for 6.37 cents a pound, when produced with tractors; for 9.39 cents a pound, when the tractors were used to prepare seed beds, and sharecroppers and tenants to gather crops; for 17.31 cents a pound, when produced altogether with sharecroppers on the old furnishing basis.

Of course, such accurate cost figures are devastating to the use much longer of the old tenant and sharecropper system of making a cotton crop.

Eventually, of course, they must and will be replaced, as a matter of cheapening the cost of production of such a vital crop as cotton is.

The final bit of mechanization that will bring this about is the manufacture and sale, or lease, of a reasonably cheap cotton-picking machine.

This is now on the way, and and when it comes ,it will mark the hasty scrapping of the obsolete system of cotton production that has been in practice since the Civil War.

Of course, this displacement of poor white and negro labor in the South through the use of machinery is going to cause profound social and financial problems.

The fact is that we are now in the first throes of trying to deal with the problem.

Thousands of tenants and sharecroppers already have been thrown out of employment.

The large majority are being supported by work upon public projects or upon charity.

Others are drifting to the cities and small towns, causing problems of beggary, crime and education.

The Federal government, of course, has made a start in placing a few hundred, or thousands of these families upon land that it owns or has purchased, and is giving them a new start in life.

Senator Bankhead has foreseen this huge social and economic problem, and attempted to solve it by having the government provide the funds with which tenants and sharecroppers may become small landowners.

This pressure will become greater as more are displaced by machinery on the larger cotton farms.

It is perhaps the largest problem that confronts the South.

ATLANTA, GA., MAY 31, 1936

## FOOD AND FEED IMPORTS

The average citizen of the United States has advanced from boyhood to manhood imbued with the general idea that the nation was self-sustaining in the matter of the principal items of food and feed. This idea was further enhanced by the enforced curtailment of agricultural endeavor in the production of various farm crops, and we were led to believe that we were not only self-sustaining, but were producing surpluses to such an extent that they could not be absorbed by the country at reasonable prices.

Statistics released by the United States Chamber of Commerce disclose such a startling increase in the importation of a few of the principal articles of food and feed, during the period of the curtailment of the home production, that they are here presented:

| | 1932 | 1935 |
|---|---|---|
| Corn ..... | 347,627 bu. | 43,242,296 bu. |
| Wheat .... | 10,026,320 bu. | 27,438,870 bu. |
| Hay ...... | 13,858 tons | 67,171 tons |
| Soy beans. | 36,568,700 lbs. | 107,463,044 lbs. |
| Cottonseed (cake, meal) .. | 1,058,598 lbs. | 59,743,572 lbs. |
| Butter ... | 1,052,598 lbs. | 22,674,642 lbs. |
| Hogs ...... | 28,875 lbs. | 3,414,317 lbs. |
| Fresh pork | 1,657,500 lbs. | 3,922,609 lbs. |
| Canned meats .. | 24,638,261 lbs. | 76,653,242 lbs. |

The theory underlying the curtailment of production of hogs, corn, wheat, cattle, etc., was to increase the price of these articles, but as the American farmer reduced his acreages of growing crops, and the government bought and destroyed hogs and cattle, these products were imported from foreign lands and sold in competition with our own farmers.

The increases in importations at a time when the nation had a surplus capacity to produce all these products could not help having an influence on the ability of the American farmer to market his own products, and are without doubt a contributing factor in American farm employment today.

Retirement of submarginal and worn-out land from crop production to forage and forest use is wise; likewise soil erosion and soil betterment projects merit all the encouragement that may be offered. Such things make for practical advancement in agriculture; but "planned production," that reduces our production to the point where we cease to be self-sustaining, and are forced to import huge quantities of food and feed which we can raise at home, is an impractical theory that failed utterly when put into practice.

The figures prove it!

General

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

## THE TRAGEDY AND THE HOPE OF SOUTHERN COTTON

Yesterday may have been a red letter day in the history of Montgomery as one of the cotton capitals of the Southern States. Whether it was a red letter day must depend upon future events, but if the idea which brought Mr. David L. Cohn from Memphis to Montgomery as a messenger to our people from the council chamber of the Southern Cotton Research Foundation should materialize, it will be a great day.

As matters stand cotton culture in the South is a dying industry.

Cotton production in the South is actually less today than it was 25 years ago. Then we grew 13 million bales a year, now we grow from 11 to 12 million bales. But, as the Southern Cotton Research Foundation says in its prospectus, from which document Mr. Cohn spoke to Montgomerians yesterday:

**But the decrease in consumption is far greater than the decreased production figures indicate. Consider this: In the past 26 years the population of the United States has increased from 90 to nearly 130 millions—a matter of 40 millions more people. And at the same time world population has increased by several hundred millions. There are millions more of potential cotton consumers now than there were in 1909-13 period. But the fact is that they are not actual consumers of American cotton.**

Nor, says the Foundation, is this all. Read: "More than half of the domestic consumption of cotton goes into industrial uses. For instance, something like 600,000 bales are used for automobile tires. There was no such use in the prewar period. Industries, too, have vastly expanded during the past 25 years and, therefore, use more cotton than they did before the war. But the total consumption of cotton at home decreases but little . . . In the period 1910-14 91 million Americans used 4,868,000 bales annually. In 1935 130 million Americans used only 5,240,000 bales. In other words 40 millions more people used only 372,000 more bales of cotton. This increased population makes a country as large as France, more than half the population of Germany".

We continue by quoting—it is well that we do, for what the Foundation says is better than anything that we or anybody else can say on the subject:

**Both at home and abroad cotton now faces the sharp and ever-mounting competition of other materials: Rayon, artificial cotton, jute, linen, wool, paper and other substitutes. Where rayon, for instance, is not entirely substituted for cotton, it is mixed with cotton to produce a hybrid fabric.**

**Cottonseed products also face the competition of substitutes, and there is every reason to believe that the use of these products will diminish unless new uses are found for them. The possibilities of cottonseed have not begun to be explored; little is known about its infinite possibilities. Hulls, for instance, may be the source of important chemicals; linters may find far wider uses than at present; cake or meal may eventually be largely used for human food.**

**It must be borne in mind that this is an age of the competition of materials. Steel replaces wood. The amount of wood, for instance, in automobile bodies, is now almost negligible. Oil drives coal off the seas and ships are propelled by oil-burning Diesel engines. The direct effect is distress and poverty in the English coal fields. On land electricity vies with gas, oil and coal, and at some point all of these compete with each other. In quite the same way, plastics compete with metals and wood; and Mr. Ford proposes soon to make automobile bodies of soy beans.**

**Wherever you may look and whatever field you may survey, you find overwhelming evidence that no raw material may now claim a natural monopoly of use. Nor can the cotton farmer stand by complacently and assume that merely because the Egyptians used cotton 4,000 years ago it will always be used by mankind. Certainly it cannot be assumed that cotton will continue to be used in vast quantities.**

It comes down to this: If cotton consumption in the last 25 years had kept pace with the increase of population we would have consumed 2,000,000 more bales last year than we did. That would have made the cotton grower prosperous.

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What to do? The great manufacturing industries of the nation spend millions for research, and so keep alive and prosperous—in that way they remain an object of interest to their stockholders. If they had been as lethargic and complacent as cotton growers their industries today would be dead. Instead they are gathering new life and fresh inspiration.

The dairy industry has been more enterprising than the cotton industry in exploiting its wares. It needs no laboratory to find new uses for dairy products, but it has used its money and human talent to advertise dairy products on a grand scale; cotton has not.

The natural way of escape from death is for the cotton industry to put the intelligence of its leadership to the highest possible uses. The first step is to establish at our own expense a great chemical laboratory to study new uses for cotton fibre and cotton seed. If such a laboratory can find a way to add 2,000,000 bales to the annual consumption total it will be well worth while. But it should find new uses for much larger quantities of cotton. The field is in reality unlimited.

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The South's need is to find incerasing new uses for cotton and at the same time to advertise cotton products aggressively everywhere in the world. This, we take it, is a matter of interest to every rich widow who is living on tax exempt bonds and every farm tenant in the magnoliaed South, to say nothing of all the newspapers, all the merchants, all the bankers, all the lawyers—and all the textile manufacturers!

If the American saga is true, when tragedy comes, the beam of a new dawn must be far behind!

## AMERICA AND COOPERATIVES

Ideas, in America, like thunder clouds in summer, gather from every direction and then break in a cloudburst, or die in a mere whirlwind. The idea of American cooperatives seems to have broken all over the country within the last few months. The movement itself is not new even in this country, but it has impressed itself more firmly on the American consciousness now that President Roosevelt has appointed a commission to study European cooperatives. Lately the leading periodicals have been publishing short articles on the subject and at the same time carrying editorial comment praising or condemning the idea, according to the point of view of its editors. Apparently the cooperative is about to become the new intellectual plaything of our people.

The first cooperative with its by-laws and philosophy was organized in Rochdale, an impoverished section of England, 94 years ago, by 28 weavers with an unbelievably small capital. Today it is embracing a large percentage of business in England, controlling the wheat from where it is grown in Canada to bread sold all over the British Isles, as well as other commodities.

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as the authority on the subject, claims 30 per cent of the business.

American cooperatives have been in successful operation for about 17 years in the middle West, according to Bertram Fowler, who has traced the history of the various organizations in this country in his book "Consumers' Cooperative in America."

The idea of cooperative marketing among farmers in the South has been the dream of many Southern reformers who have watched with envy, the fruit growers in California, and there are some effective marketing cooperatives throughout the South. The real strength of the cooperatives, however, is the consumers co-ops which maintain that they point the way to the true democracy for which America and Americans stand.

The principles of consumers cooperation are simple. Groups are formed and resources pooled to buy necessities. Some groups were organized to purchase gasoline and oil, others to buy seed, feed and fertilizer, still others to buy food staples and simple clothing. Each person entering the group buys a share and goods are sold at current market prices. The profits accruing at the end of the year are either diverted to expansion ends or distributed among the owners participating in the movement. Everyone owning a share of the co-op has a voice in its management, but he must act personally; no proxy votes are allowed. No matter how many shares one person holds, he is entitled to no more than one vote.

Advocates of this plan point to this feature as a principle of democracy which carries weight from the bottom, instead of government from the top. Here is the chance they claim to assert private rights in terms of dollars and cents. The list of cooperative organizations in America is impressive. Their case histories sound like the fight of the pioneers to conquer America in its early days.

The Cooperative League in New York which is primarily concerned with gathering news of all organizations and printing material for its formation and management in sections of the country where consumers are still unorganized, stress the educational factor of the movement as well as its philosophy. The League insists that it is useless to attempt to organize with only the profit incentive and where ignorance prevails about its function, which is to provide the best materials at the lowest price without diminishing wages. The movement calls for sound judgment and excellent management. Many universities throughout the mid-West are including the study of the movement in their courses to train teachers and executives to organize.

Naturally there are two sides to the question and it is being debated hotly throughout the land. Business men are asking, will the co-ops wipe out the small business man? Can it compete with the chain store competition? Does the cooperative idea fit the American temperament?

Trade journals answer these questions as they would be expected to answer them, but this does not dismay the leaders in the movement who with the strength of their established wholesale and research laboratories claim that the movement is the only road away from Communism or Fascism.

Unbiased reporters of the movement do not venture to make predictions, but see many virtues in its principles. Americans with empty pocketbooks are attracted to its promises and many will join the venture, no doubt, in hope of a quick panacea for many malignant economic ills.

It is decidedly American to become inflamed at the prospect of a venture that promises a cure for the ills that beset the country from every side. However, lest anyone become unduly excited by the impressive figures of the established co-ops or see unadulterated benefit in the movement let him remember the warning of its founders, as well as the excitement caused by the first news of Technocracy a few years ago.

Consumers cooperatives may be a way out for many, but its progress necessarily requires understanding, education and slow growth.

**CHATTANOOGA, TENN.**
**TIMES**

JUL 14 1936

## RURAL SOUTH'S NEEDS.

Before the Institute of Regional Development, at the University of North Carolina, Dr. W. F. Ogburn, of the University of Chicago, recently called the South "the breeding ground of the Nation." Not only does the South show a rising birth rate in the poorer counties, asserts Dr. Ogburn, but increasing unemployment as well. And this is accompanied by a migration of the better elements to other parts of the United States. This leaves, and will continue to leave, a disproportionately large number of children whose education and health care must be paid for out of meager taxes.

Dr. Ogburn stated that "Georgia now has twice the educational burden of Illinois, and there is one county in Georgia where the average money income of all farmers is $59 a year, with which to buy everything, from school books to fertilizer." Further, a study by Louisiana State University showed a 40 per cent. population increase coming from the poorer counties.

The statement about Georgia farmers and their utterly inadequate income is doubtless true of more than one County in that State and in other Southern States also. And with drought conditions widespread throughout the South, it is probable that if similar studies are made next year they will show even more serious conditions in rural regions all over the South and Southwest.

With an increasing birth rate amongst the poorer rural population, it is imperative that more, not less, opportunity be offered them for schooling and health building. What could be more conducive to lawlessness and mob rule than for the preponderance of population to be illiterate or nearly so? It is a well-established fact, deduced from study by interracial groups, that the usual focii of revolting barbarisms, such as floggings and tarrings, not to mention lynchings, are in rural districts where economic depression rules and where schooling is either the poorest or nonexistent.

A remedy for many abuses in rural Georgia, in the opinion of economists and educational experts of that State, would be to largely reduce the number of Counties, Georgia now having more counties than Texas.

To raise the economic and educational status of Southern communities that are not near large cities is one of the most pressing problems now facing the South. Quite aside from the Federal aid which is being given farming communities and which will have to be continued for months to come, rural problems must be solved ultimately by the States themselves and, in a large measure, through reforms in County Government.

That a group of Hamilton County citizens, the Volunteers, are at present earnestly seeking a better method of administering County affairs and of stopping financial leakage and other abuses, is a hopeful symptom. This kind of leadership must spring up and go forward all over the South if our section is to escape with Democracy intact.

## THE FARM TENANCY PROBLEM

Constitution 9-2-36
Atlanta Ga

The increasing realization of the necessity for a solution of the farm tenancy evil is reflected in the quick response of Governor Landon and other Republican campaign leaders to the action of President Roosevelt in calling upon Senator Bankhead and Representative Marvin Jones, of Texas, to "prepare plans for meeting the farm tenancy problem."

Every step of the Democratic administration looking to the improvement of the condition of the farmer has been bitterly criticized by Governor Landon's eastern backers, the Wall Street wing of the Republican party having been particularly caustic on the crop restriction programs, the rehabilitation projects and other farm aid plans.

And yet, as the President goes one step farther in seeking to solve the major agricultural problems of the country, the Republican presidential nominee is forced by increasing public approval of the Democratic program to ignore the stand of his eastern supporters and take over, practically lock, stock and barrel, a proposal similar to those they have bitterly assailed in the past.

It is significant that the new interest of the Republican party in the farm tenancy evil comes only after an alarming increase in this condition in the great western states that have suffered from disastrous drouths during recent years.

Heretofore farm tenancy has been largely a southern problem, and the Republican party has not been interested, but now that it has developed in the normally Republican states of the west, the new interest aroused during a campaign year is pointedly significant.

That the tenant farmer, commonly supposed to be, as a rule, shiftless, lazy and unappreciative, can be made into a valuable citizen of his community, has been amply demonstrated by the success of the rehabilitation farm projects in Georgia and other states. Only a small per cent of the farmers put into these projects have failed to make good.

If a sound program is evolved by which the great majority of the tenant farmers can be changed into prosperous landowners, the step will have as far-reaching effect on the prosperity of our entire economic system as any other major move by the Democratic administration.

Agriculture - 1936
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### A FARM TENANCY PLANK

A group of 18 Southerners have endorsed a proposed farm tenancy plank and asked its endorsement by the Democratic convention at Philadelphia.

Six Iowa Congressmen had previously proposed the plank and asked its consideration by President Roosevelt. The proposal reads:

"The party pledges itself to continue the use of the credit facilities of the Federal government for the relief of distressed farm owners. It further pledges itself to the creation of a sound and constructive legislative program for extending the credit facilities of the Federal government to qualified farm tenants to enable them to become farm-home owners."

The Iowa Congressmen pointed out that according to the 1935 census approximately 50 per cent of the farms in their State were operated on a tenant basis compared to 23.8 per cent in 1880.

The South, more than any other section, is afflicted with the economic disease of tenancy. In Alabama approximately 64 per cent of the total number of farmers are tenants. Tenancy afflicts those caught in its toils—landowners, banks, merchants and independent farmers as well are the sufferers.

A plank in the Democratic platform would insure immediate consideration of the Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill at the next session of Congress. It would serve to call the attention of the general public to the problem of farm tenancy and its threat to the fundamentals of democratic government.

No one aware of the political and social implications of tenancy can look with equanimity upon a condition in which half of the nation's farmers are tilling soil which they do not own.

### ARGENTINE COTTON PLANTERS DISAPPOINTED

Argentine planters, induced to put in a record cotton acreage this year, are disappointed by results. They planted a record area of 909,000 acres, but the crop will not exceed 230,000 bales, according to a report to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics from Agricultural Attache P. O. Nyhus at Buenos Aires.

Last year 707,000 acres was planted and the crop totaled 295,000 bales. The average area during the five years ended in 1934 was 355,000 acres, and the average crop for that period 162,000 bales.

This year's crop has been damaged by cotton leaf worms and pink bollworms as well as by unfavorable weather. The crop is late because planting was delayed by drought following excessive rains in November and December. In many districts of the Chaco Territory, which normally produces about 90 per cent of the Argentine cotton crop, the promise of a crop this season is limited to new top growth.

Says Mr. Nyhus:

"Argentina is the fourth largest cotton producing area south of the United States, and is exceeded in importance only by Brazil, Mexico, and Peru. High prices for cotton in recent years have stimulated interest in expanding production, especially in the Chaco Territory. Last year the Argentine Government created a Cotton Board to bring about an expansion in acreage and ginning facilities, improvements in production and marketing methods and transportation facilities, to establish grades, and to improve varieties planted.

"This season's poor crop prospects have dampened somewhat the general enthusiasm over possibilities of a great expansion in cotton production in the Argentine, but the government program will be continued. The Governor of the Chaco recently told bureau officials at Washington that he plans to inaugurate widespread improvements in production and marketing methods based on his observations in the United States."

"The Governor arranged, during a first-hand study of the cotton industry in the United States, to settle 10 American planters American methods of production, cultivation, and harvesting."

## Brazilian Cotton Exports Increase

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 14.—(AP)—Estimates by officials today were that Brazil may export 800,000 bales of cotton during 1936 in comparison to the 610,000 bales exported last year.

The record, they said, would be reached only if Germany purchased 352,000 bales and Japan 100,000, both of which purchases are in prospect.

The year's Brazilian crop was estimated at 1,577,000 bales as compared to 1,196,000 in 1935.

Sales to Germany are negotiated under the "compensated trade" accord by which Germany will dispose of coal, steel and manufactured products in Brazil.

Motto Ohno, general manager of the Nipponese-Brazilian Economic Society, said Brazil sales to Japan should ultimately eliminate from Japan's markets the cotton now sold by the United States, India and Egypt.

Cotton was included in the new trade agreement with Italy in order to increase cotton exports.

Although Americans actively opposed the agreement as hurting Brazil's trade with her largest customer, the United States, Brazilians asserted the United States had sold 700,000 bales of cotton to Germany under a similar agreement.

Charlotte, N. C. Observer
June 17, 1936

## Negro Solon Blocks Bulwinkle Bill To Probe Cost Of Farm Implements

The Observer Bureau, 1230 Nt'l. Press Bldg
By Leased Wire.

WASHINGTON, June 16—The joint resolution of Representative A. L. Bulwinkle of the tenth North Carolina district providing for an investigation of the cost of manufacture, distribution, and price to farmers of farm implements and machinery appears doomed for this Congress due to objections of Arthur W. Mitchell, Negro member of Congress from Illinois.

Mitchell, a Democrat who was elected from the first Illinois district to succeed Oscar Depriest, Negro Republican, has remained a very quiet member for several months. But when the consent calendar was called in the House to dispose of measures that members are anxious to have passed at this session, Mitchell objected to a number of measures, and among these was the Bulwinkle resolution.

It provides that the Federal Trade commisison go into the entire matter of the cost of manufacture and sale of farm implements, tools and machinery, the last three years, without extra expense to the government, and report to Congress. This report would reveal whether any evidence was found of combinations to fix prices or control production and other evidence that would indicate that a combination of any kind had been entered into in violation of the anti-trust laws. The resolution already had been favorably reported by the Senate committee on interstate commerce of which Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana is chairman.

Senators and House members are anxious that the bill pass, owing to the alleged rapid increase in the cost of farm machinery, since they were anxious to know the true facts as to why the price increase has taken place.

### THE TRIBUNE EXPLAINS ALL

Replying to a recent editorial in The Advertiser, The Chicago Tribune says:

In further criticism of our editorial, the editor of The Advertiser says: "The Tribune falsely assumes that the bulk of American cotton is grown by powerful landlords, when as a matter of fact the bulk of it is grown by small farmers. Certainly most of the cotton grown in Alabama is grown by small farmers. . . ."

The Tribune made no such assumption. We did assume that vast numbers of the cotton farmers do not own their land and that the bulk of the Government's bounty on land held out of use went, therefore, to owners, not farmers. How true this set of assumptions was is easily proved. Alongside the editorial criticizing our remarks is another editorial entitled, "A Farm Tenancy Plank," in which the following sentences appear:

"The South, more than any other section.

is afflicted with the economic disease of tenancy. In Alabama approximately 64 per cent of the total number of farmers are tenants."

We repeat, the Bankhead bill profited the owners of land. They were richly rewarded with cash for restricting their acreage. Because fewer acres were cultivated there was less work for tenants. Hundreds of thousands of them were thrown off the land and they have been kept from starvation only because the northern taxpayers are supporting them. The census of 1930 revealed 30,000 unemployed in Alabama. Today there are 63,000 on the Federal work relief rolls in the State. Mr. Bankhead is responsible for much of this increase.

One other point made by The Advertiser deserves attention. It is asserted that the South is not as poor today as it was before the Bankhead law was enacted. Mail order houses and farm machinery factories in Chicago, it is said, have benefited accordingly.

That is the result in part of the fact that the taxpayers of other sections have been obliged to pour millions for relief and benefits into the South. In any event, the really important question is not whether the South is better off now than before, but whether the Bankhead law is responsible for any improvement which may have taken place. If the editor of The Advertiser is genuinely desirous of learning what benefits the New Deal's agricultural policies have brought to the South, a reading of the report of the Government's own agricultural bureau of economics is recommended. It is the work of experts of unquestioned standing. The report reached the conclusion that the cotton growers of this country would be better off today if there had been no cotton control. The report, unfortunately, is not easily obtained. It was promptly suppressed by the Secretary of Agriculture because it contained proof that the New Deal schemes had done the farmers more harm than good. Perhaps a private appeal by the editor of The Advertiser to Speaker Bankhead will yield a copy.

The Advertiser is familiar with the report of the bureau of agricultural economics, due to the enterprise of The Tribune. Some months ago The Tribune published the substance of the report. The Advertiser promptly published its own interpretation and criticism of the report, the substance of its remarks being that the report was so much hooey.

The Tribune is an ardent partisan, a good cavalryman, but as a strategist it leaves something to be desired. It abuses Alabama because this State pays less than 2 million dollars a year in income taxes, yet from 1933 to 1936 it has received in relief and AAA payments $146,610,989.

Is that because Alabama, a Democratic State, has an advantage over Illinois, a State that sometimes votes Republican, or is it because of this State's small population and the low economic status of the majority of its people?

Alabamians, man for man, are poorer than the citizens of Illinois. There is no question as to this. But the fact is that when Franklin D. Roosevelt took the oath of office in March, 1933, J. P. Morgan couldn't get into his own bank, yet today, whether in Alabama or Illinois the lowliest depositor can get into any bank and get his money.

Illinois in 1933 was paralyzed. Nobody but Dawes had any money—he had a line of credit with Hoover's RFC approximating $90,000,000. Little banks throughout that great State were closing daily, little merchants were hysterical, farmers were in despair. The Tribune's vast advertising volume shrank and its editors wrote grimly that the people should keep their chins up until the storm passed.

The storm did pass. Hogs, corn and wheat grown in Illinois, rose steadily in prices. Kansas wheat rose steadily—it jumped embarrassingly yistiddy, of all days—and Southern cotton jumped from 5 cents a pound to 12 soon after the Bankhead bill was enacted.

Now, The Advertiser wishes to be fair—it has said before, and will say again, that if Herbert Hoover had continued in office as President he would have followed the course that Roosevelt did, because there was no other course to follow.

Hoover had already fixed his compass, if belatedly, before Roosevelt came in. But if Hoover or Roosevelt or whoever might have been made President in March, 1933, had not levied upon the resources of solvent taxpayers to subsidize American agriculture, if indeed nothing had been done, The Chicago Tribune and The Montgomery Advertiser would today be wrecks ready for the junk pile where old automobiles offend the sight.

All of which comes down to this: He blundered a good deal, first and last, but in the end Franklin Delano Roosevelt saved his country, including that part of it known as The Chicago Tribune and the Dawes bank.

**THE SOUTH, MR. COMER AND JAPAN**

The faith of Alabama and the South in Donald Comer is based on his record as an enlightened and capable industrialist who has been ever aware that what is good for this region is good for its cotton mills and vice versa.

In his advocacy of an exclusion of Japanese textiles The Advertiser knows that Mr. Comer would not wish to favor a policy that might inflict serious injury on the South's cotton farmer and hence also injury on the cotton manufacturers for whom Mr. Comer is the spokesman.

It is with this fact in view that The Advertiser calls the attention of Mr. Comer and the South to some circumstances that should be weighed carefully before the South is committed to a policy of such far-reaching import as total exclusion of Japanese textiles.

The Norfolk Virginian-Pilot recently cited the experience of Australia in this connection. Australia raised her tariffs on certain Japanese goods. Japan retaliated with a ban on Australian products, including wool. The obvious question is: Would Japan be inclined to be more lenient to the United States if we excluded her textiles, or would she retaliate by banning our cotton?

Japan has become our best cotton customer. In 1935 she bought a million and a quarter bales—more than any other single nation. A million and a quarter bales of cotton is almost 12 per cent of our total production. Can the South or Mr. Comer afford to jeopardize such a market?

The Virginian-Pilot quotes the following significant paragraph from a recent report of the Royal Bank of Canada:

> We hear, for example, much discussion of the inroads which Japan has made in the export markets of other countries, but very little of the fact that Japan is using the proceeds of this forced trade to purchase goods abroad for which, in the main, there would have been no other markets, as witness the cleaning up of the scrap metal market in the United States and Canada or the purchase of 700,000 tons of obsolete British shipping. In fact, it is arguable that the most potent factor in the revivifying of Japan's external trade has been the absolute necessity to purchase goods abroad rather than her much advertised ability to produce goods at costs very much lower than her competitors. She must produce and sell at whatever price she can get if she is to purchase the things which are necessary from abroad.

Japan, it is true, is becoming one of the world's biggest salesmen. At the same time she is also becoming one of the world's best customers.

Before deciding to refuse to buy Japanese products we must consider whether we are in a position to stop selling our own surpluses to Japan. It would be a calamity for the South to see its cotton mills become idle. It would be an equally great calamity for the South to lose its best raw cotton customer. The Advertiser believes that Mr. Comer and other cotton manufacturers would be the last to favor such a loss if it could be averted.

## Tenancy Is National

The fact that President Roosevelt chose Omaha, Neb., as the place at which to discuss the hopes of his administration to launch positive policies designed to assist tenant farmers to become owners shows that Mr. Roosevelt is aware that farm tenancy is a national, not a sectional question. With more than 760,000 tenant farmers, the corn belt and short grass states have a tenant problem fast becoming as acute as any that exists in the old south or in the newer cotton regions of the southwest.

10-13-36

Rupert B. Vance, eminent agronomist, has recently pointed out that "until recently in this country no critical theory of tenancy has been developed which takes into consideration the fact that while the United States is drifting into tenancy, certain European countries with semi-feudal backgrounds, notably Denmark, Ireland and France, have made the transition to peasant proprietorship."

In the middle west the theorizing about tenancy until the depression of 1921 was part and parcel of an elaborate propaganda that began with the Civil War and continued for 60 years. The object of the propaganda was to keep the west and south apart politically and to keep the midwestern farmer deceived about tribute exacted from him by beneficiaries of the protective tariff. One of these propaganda theories was to the effect that the status of tenant farmers in the middle west was only a rung in an economic ladder by which young men climbed up to ownership of land.

After the collapse of land values in 1920 and 1921, however, the steady increase of tenancy could no longer be explained away in that manner. In the middle west there are now 375,000 tenant farmers who have struggled a lifetime to secure ownership of land and are now in their old age exactly where they started.

A major achievement of Franklin D. Roosevelt has been to reunite the south and west in defense of their common interests. Not since Andrew Jackson and Stephen A. Douglas have the two sections co-operated as under Roosevelt. It is altogether fitting that Roosevelt should sound the call to face the problem of farm tenancy as a national problem, and that is exactly what it is.

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**FORT WORTH, TEX.**
**MORNING STAR-TELEGRAM**

FEB 8 1936

## Farm Tenancy.

THE agricultural expert of the University of Virginia laid before the annual conference of the Southern Agricultural Workers at Jackson, Miss., Thursday, a strong appeal for reconstruction of the existing system of farm tenancy throughout the South. He defined it as a "breeder of revolution." "Economic enslavement of our people, either rural or urban, is subversive to the American way of life," he said. "It is bound ultimately to prove seriously disruptive of our fundamental institutions, even our form of government." He gave Mississippi a tenant farm percentage of 72.2 per cent.

The system is merely an exaggerated extension of the only possible method of producing cotton crops, beginning with the Reconstruction Era. The South was prostrate. Negroes were the only labor source. It was necessary for the land owners to obtain productivity. There was no money with which to hire laborers in the fields. Crop sharing was the only possible way out. It became the habit and carried on to include white farmers. It extends throughout the cotton States and is as fixed as an agricultural element with the tenant farmers as with the land owners. Any attempt at reconstruction meets as strong opposition from the one as from the other. There are hundreds of thousands of farmers who would be helpless were the familiar method of taking over a farm for a year changed to any other plan.

But the change is inevitable. It runs contrary to the agricultural theory dating back to the Magna Charta. It aims at production while providing nothing for soil conservation. It takes no thought of community thrift. The product receives all of the accent and such auxiliaries as purchasing power, home development and beautification, educational advancement and community building are treated as non-existent. Each succeeding generation shows little improvement.

Crop diversification is as much a national issue as is soil erosion preventive. Agriculturists are facing the stern necessity of feeding the human and livestock populations from the land and by the labor applied to it. Whatever comes of the national relief projects will inevitably be in that direction. But for the prevalence of the tenant system the emergency which came with the depression would not have included a resident of the rural districts. Given the land, the labor and the practice of self-maintenance, the farmers would have fed themselves and a goodly portion of the urban depression sufferers. The reverse being the case is the strongest possible indictment of the tenancy system —exactly as set out by the speaker at Jackson.

Agricultural products represent merely the lesser part of the equation. The human element is the supreme importance. Those communities entirely bound round by tenant farmer conditions may never realize their deserved measure of progress until the grievous condition is permanently corrected. It is the South's greatest mistake.

Birmingham, Ala. News
February 10, 1936

## Eradicating A Breeder Of Revolution In The South

The best way to prevent unrest and possible revolution is to eradicate the fundamental cause of that unrest. That is an old axiom, but it cannot too often be repeated.

Those interested in preventing the spread of Communism among Negroes in the South realize that the best weapon they have is education. They know that any effort at coercion would be stupid and suicidal, but by bettering the lot of the objects of the Communist agitators advancement can be made.

Wilson Gee, agricultural expert from the University of Virginia, in addressing the delegates at the annual conference of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers, termed farm tenancy a breeder of revolution, and said that the best way for the South to avoid becoming the prey of agitators and propagandists is to eradicate tenancy

"Do away with farm tenancy if you want an antidote to revolution agitations," Mr. Gee declared after he had warned against the dangers of "economic enslavement."

Several measures have been proposed whereby farm tenancy may be eradicated, but so far very little actual work has been done. At the present time the number of farm tenants is increasing rather than decreasing.

The Bankhead bill for eradicating farm tenancy, passed in the Senate last Summer has not been considered by the House of Representatives. It offers the most logical program yet submitted, and should be passed at the earliest possible moment if we would remove one of the worst cancers in American civilization.

**OMAHA**

**NEBRASKA**

FEB 19 1936

**Dred Scott and the AAA.**

Plattsmouth, Neb., Feb. 14.—To the Editor of The World-Herald: To listen to Herbert Hoover on Lincoln's birthday praising the decision of the supreme court holding the AAA unconstitutional made one feel that Hoover was heaping insults to the memory of Abraham Lincoln. The AAA decision was only another Dred Scott decision. The Dred Scott decision was based upon the principle of state rights. The AAA decision was based upon the principle of state rights. Sherman, Grant and Sheridan set aside the Dred Scott decision. The Dred Scott decision made impossible the settlement of the slavery question without bloodshed. The chief executive, Abraham Lincoln, nullified the decision of the supreme court, and while the constitution contained a specific provision providing for the holding of chattel slavery, Abraham Lincoln set aside that part of the constitution by the emancipation proclamation. This proclamation vacated and set aside a part of the constitution before any amendment was offered to the constitution.

How could anyone honestly on Lincoln's birthday praise the AAA decision of the supreme court without an implied condemnation of Abraham Lincoln for nullifying the Dred Scott decision and for vacating and setting aside a portion of the constitution by proclamation and without amendment. A. L. TIDD.

**New York Evening Post**

JAN 24 1936

## Wallace and the Sharecroppers

Some of Secretary Wallace's actions are most disappointing in the light of the fine evangelical fervor shown in his speeches on the New Deal.

Why, for example, were representatives of 3,000,000 tenant farmers and share-croppers and representatives of 3,000,000 agricultural workers conspicuously absent from his recent conference on a substitute for the AAA?

Why were the delegates of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union told they could not attend the conference because there was no room for them—when Secretary Wallace had only 100 delegates at his conference in an auditorium which holds 1,000?

It seems to us especially important that tenants, croppers and farm workers have a hand in framing a substitute for AAA—because the working of AAA, whether so intended or not, did discriminate against these three underprivileged groups.

Some time ago the terror used by the planters against the tenants in Arkansas was encouraged by Secretary Wallace's suppression of the report made on conditions in that State by Mrs. Mary Connor Myers of the AAA legal staff.

Now a new wave of terror has begun in Arkansas. Blacklists, death threats and beatings are being used to break up the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. Howard Kester, its organizer, narrowly escaped lynching and two of its members were shot by police while attending a meeting in a church at Earle, Ark.

**Secretary Wallace certainly does not approve of such tactics. Why then does he bar tenant farmers from his conference and still refuse to print the Myers report?**

Since this report was made by a Federal employee at Federal expense and involves questions of Federal farm policy, why can't Congress ask Secretary Wallace to make it public?

**IT AFFECTS ALL OF US**

**The chief obstacle to passage of Senator Bankhead's tenant farm bill seems to be a passive indifference which is at times more apt to result in defeat than active resistance.**

**As passed by the Senate at the last session of Congress the bill would set up a Farmers' Home Corporation with a capital stock of $50,000,000 from the treasury and a borrowing power of $1,000,000,000. Under its provisions tenant farmers would have an opportunity to purchase**

# Here Is Simple Explanation of the New Farm Program

*WASHINGTON, March 23.—(AP) AAA experts today offered these answers to questions seeking an explanation of the $470,000,000 soil conservation program:*

Q. What is the soil conservation program?

A. It is a program designed to preserve soil fertility. One method of doing this is to plant legumes and soil imporving crops in place of commercial crops which exhaust the land.

Q. What is the goal of the program?

A. To shift 30,000,000 acres in 1936 from commercial soil depleting crops to soil conservation crops. This also would in some measure help prevent surpluses in commercial cash crops, with resultant low prices.

Q. How does the government expect to get farmers to shift lands from cash crops to soil conserving crops?

A. By payment of a subsidy to farmers who agree to shift lands.

Q. How much will this subsidy be?

A. The subsidy will average $10 an acre for the 30,000,000 acres.

Q. Who will administer the soil conservation program?

A. The old Agricultural Adjustment Administration has been designated as the agency to administer the new soil conservation and domestic allotment law.

**How Administered.**

Q. How will the program be administered?

A. The country has been divided into five regions, with regional offices in Washington. Each state will have a state committee of farmers and farm experts. Each county will have a producer's association, a county committee and community committees. These committees will have actual charge of administering the program in the field.

Q. Who will be eligible to receive a subsidy payment?

A. Any farmer in the United States who joins a county producers' association and meets certain crop planting requirements set up by the AAA.

Q. Will the farmer have to sign a contract?

A. No. Contracts between farmers and the government were invalidated by the supreme court.

Q. How will a farmer proceed to obtain a subsidy payment?

A. A farmer will sign an application to the government for a payment. Community and county committees will survey his farm and determine a "base acreage" for soil depleting crops. The farmer then must plant his crops in conformity with regulations made by the AAA. After the local committees have ascertained that the farmer has met the requirements, he will receive a payment.

Q. When will the first subsidy payment be made?

A. Probably not before next fall.

**More Than One Payment?**

Q. Will more than one kind of payment be made to a co-operating farmer?

A. Yes. There will be two kinds of payment. One will average $10 an acre for each acre of soil depleting lands shifted to soil building crops. The other payment will be a maximum of $1 an acre for each acre the farmer has planted in soil conserving and soil building crops in 1936.

Q. What will be the classifications of crops?

A. For purposes of determining the payments, there will be three classifications: Soil conserving, soil building, and soil depleting. The soil depleting crops are largely the country's principal cash crops, such as cotton, corn, wheat, tobacco, potatoes, and truck crops. Soil conserving crops are annual, biennial and perennial legumes; perennial grasses when on plowable crop land, and small grains, when plowed under for a green manure crop. Soil building crops are the legumes when plowed under in 1936; perennial grasses when seeded in 1936 small grains when plowed under in 1936 as a manure crop, and forest trees planted on crop land in 1936. There are two kinds of payments and three classifications of crop.

Q. What are the specific rates of subsidy payments?

A. For cotton, five cents a pound for cotton which would have been grown on the diverted acres; for tobacco, from three to five cents a pound; for peanuts, a cent and a half a pound. For all other crops, except rice, sugar cane and sugar beets and flax, an average of $10 an acre, varying on productivity of the soil.

Q. How do subsidy payment to flax, rice and sugar products differ from the others?

**How Many Acres?**

A. Payments to these producers will be made on the actual production of allotted acres.

Q. What is the minimum requirement a farmer must meet to qualify for a payment?

A. A farmer must have an acreage of soil conserving crops equal to 20 per cent of the farm's soil depleting base, or equal to the maximum number of acres of depleting crops which may be diverted.

Q. What are the maximum number of acres farmers may divert for payment?

A. Cotton, 25 per cent; tobacco 30 per cent; peanuts, 20 per cent; all other crops except sugar cane and sugar beets, rice and flax, 15 per cent.

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their own farms, homes and equipment and pay for them over a long period of time with the advantage of low interest rates.

In effect it would give the tenant farmer and share-cropper the same advantages given home-owners under the Home Owners Loan Corporation and home-builders under the Federal Housing Administration and allied agencies.

The South, because of its relatively high percentage of farm tenancy, stands to gain most if the bill is enacted. Almost 3,000,000 families in this section are classed as tenants or share-croppers. It can readily be seen what a tremendous advantage it would be for the South if even a small proportion of this group could become independent farmers.

In comparison to the potential advantages, the $50,000,000 of Federal funds necessary for the program would be minor indeed. The bulk of the financing would be borne by the public. Since there is ample private capital available and since the HOLC bonds are selling at a premium, there should be no difficulty in finding ready investors.

So far the only formidable opposition to the Bankhead bill, which is sponsored in the House by Representative Jones of Texas, is confined to those who see in it a tendency toward Socialism. It has been pointed out many times that a number of countries, including England and Denmark, have long since inaugurated similar movements with marked success.

Far from being a trend toward Socialism or Communism, the tenant farm bill would make possible a bulwark against such tendencies. At present the tenant farm population constitutes a definite liability and a potential threat to democracy. It is fertile ground for the fantastic promises of the Huey Longs, the Upton Sinclairs and the Dr. Townsends and is usually the first to respond to such movements.

Since tenant farmers and share-croppers pay practically no taxes directly they have little if any interest in the conduct of government, being a prey to back-slappers, baby-kissers and demagogues of various degrees. Make it possible for these people to own their own farms and share in both the benefits and the responsibilities of citizenship, their interests will likewise change.

A share-cropper with no property except a skillet and a mule, and sometimes not even that, is open to the promises and dreams of every rascal that comes along. The same share-cropper, once he owns forty acres and a house, becomes as capitalistic as John Pierpont Morgan.

The share-croppers and tenant farmers have little voice to speak for themselves. But it is not their interest alone that would be served by passage of the Bankhead bill. Every individual who makes his home in a community within trading distance of a tenant farmer has a direct interest in it, and that includes all of us in the South.

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# SHARECROPPERS' AID OBJECTIVE OF SPEECH

## Lecturer Brought About Co-operative Farm

Furthering a movement to aid sharecroppers and tenant farmers of the south, Sherwood Eddy will address the Memphis public at 2:30 o'clock Sunday afternoon at First Methodist Church.

Mr. Eddy, author, lecturer and world traveler with headquarters in New York, recently made a trip through the south that resulted in establishing a co-operative farm on a 2,138 acre tract of land in Mississippi, for evicted sharecroppers and tenant farmers.

Of his trip through Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee, Mr. Eddy says he found "peonage, serfdom, poverty, disease and sometimes terror and violence."

With the aid of associates, Mr. Eddy has acquired a tract near Hillhouse, Miss. The property includes 600 acres ready for cultivation with room for 100 families. Already 22 families, including negroes, have settled on the place.

An open forum will follow his address, "What's Wrong With Our World and What Can We Do to Right It? Sunday. Dr. George Stoves, pastor, will deliver the opening prayer and the Rev. J. J. Walker, pastor of East End Christian Church, will preside. Mr. Walker emphasized that the meeting is not religious in nature.

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# An American Peasantry?

**(Montgomery Advertiser)**

Dr. Howard W. Odum, in concluding his series of discussions of Southern problems at the annual Institute of State and Local Affairs at the University of Alabama, declared that the American farmer is threatened with peasantry.

The warning is not an idle one. Those who dismiss the possibility with a shrug may soon, and in the not-so-distant future, find themselves rudely awakened by the actuality of peasantry with all of its implications.

We in America have looked upon peonage in Europe and other sections of the globe as a system that could never have a counterpart in our own country. But if men and women in America live under the same conditions and are subject to the same circumstances as the peasants of Europe, they will be peasants in every respect except name.

Yet no other section of the globe has the same potentialities for a richer life for all its people than our own.

"The planning of a richer farm life and agrarian culture through the improvement of lands, the increase of value, the diversification of crops and opportunities, the economic profitableness of farming, the cultural attractiveness of country life are all inseparably related to wise distributions of population and the enrichment of their culture," said Dr. Odum.

Among the problems for immediate adjustment, according to Dr. Odum, are the following:

New provisions for an adequate credit system.

Some readjustment and redistribution of the present crop land uses, with some new crops and a very large increase in ratio of food and feed crops.

Some immediate methods of raising the standard of consumption of commodities by the Southern people, both in the rural areas and in other cities.

Some arrangement whereby international exchange and trade may be promoted.

An economy which will enable the farmer to spend his cash money for needed goods rather than for commercial fertilizer and food and feed crops supplies.

Every Southerner who is able to see conditions about him today realizes that the foregoing problems must be dealt with if stagnation is not to overtake us.

# Here Is Simple Explanation of the New Farm Program

*WASHINGTON, March 23.—(AP) AAA experts today offered these answers to questions seeking an explanation of the $470,000,000 soil conservation program:*

Q. What is the soil conservation program?

A. It is a program designed to preserve soil fertility. One method of doing this is to plant legumes and soil improving crops in place of commercial crops which exhaust the land.

Q. What is the goal of the program?

A. To shift 30,000,000 acres in 1936 from commercial soil depleting crops to soil conservation crops. This also would in some measure help prevent surpluses in commercial cash crops, with resultant low prices.

Q. How does the government expect to get farmers to shift lands from cash crops to soil conserving crops?

A. By payment of a subsidy to farmers who agree to shift lands.

Q. How much will this subsidy be?

A. The subsidy will average $10 an acre for the 30,000,000 acres.

Q. Who will administer the soil conservation program?

A. The old Agricultural Adjustment Administration has been designated as the agency to administer the new soil conservation and domestic allotment law.

**How Administered.**

Q. How will the program be administered?

A. The country has been divided into five regions, with regional offices in Washington. Each state will have a state committee of farmers and farm experts. Each county will have a producer's association, a county committee and community committees. These committees will have actual charge of administering the program in the field.

Q. Who will be eligible to receive a subsidy payment?

A. Any farmer in the United States who joins a county producers' association and meets certain crop planting requirements set up by the AAA.

Q. Will the farmer have to sign a contract?

A. No. Contracts between farmers and the government were invalidated by the supreme court.

Q. How will a farmer proceed to obtain a subsidy payment?

A. A farmer will sign an application to the government for a payment. Community and county committees will survey his farm and determine a "base acreage" for soil depleting crops. The farmer then must plant his crops in conformity with regulations made by the AAA. After the local committees have ascertained that the farmer has met the requirements, he will receive a payment.

Q. When will the first subsidy payment be made?

A. Probably not before next fall.

**More Than One Payment?**

Q. Will more than one kind of payment be made to a co-operating farmer?

A. Yes. There will be two kinds of payment. One will average $10 an acre for each acre of soil depleting lands shifted to soil building crops.

The other payment will be a maximum of $1 an acre for each acre the farmer has planted in soil conserving and soil building crops in 1936.

Q. What will be the classifications of crops?

A. For purposes of determining the payments, there will be three classifications: Soil conserving, soil building, and soil depleting. The soil depleting crops are largely the country's principal cash crops, such as cotton, corn, wheat, tobacco, potatoes, and truck crops. Soil conserving crops are annual, biennial and perennial legumes; perennial grasses when on plowable crop land, and small grains, when plowed under for a green manure crop. Soil building crops are the legumes when plowed under in 1936; perennial grasses when seeded in 1936 small grains when plowed under in 1936 as a manure crop, and forest trees planted on crop land in 1936. There are two kinds of payments and three classifications of crop.

Q. What are the specific rates of subsidy payments?

A. For cotton, five cents a pound for cotton which would have been grown on the diverted acres; for tobacco, from three to five cents a pound; for peanuts, a cent and a half a pound. For all other crops, except rice, sugar cane and sugar beets and flax, an average of $10 an acre, varying on productivity of the soil.

Q. How do subsidy payment to flax, rice and sugar products differ from the others?

**How Many Acres?**

A. Payments to these producers will be made on the actual production of allotted acres.

Q. What is the minimum requirement a farmer must meet to qualify for a payment?

A. A farmer must have an acreage of soil conserving crops equal to 20 per cent of the farm's soil depleting base, or equal to the maximum number of acres of depleting crops which may be diverted.

Q. What are the maximum number of acres farmers may divert for payment?

A. Cotton, 25 per cent; tobacco, 30 per cent; peanuts, 20 per cent; all other crops except sugar cane and sugar beets, rice and flax, 15 per cent.

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their own farms, homes and equipment and pay for them over a long period of time with the advantage of low interest rates.

In effect it would give the tenant farmer and share-cropper the same advantages given home-owners under the Home Owners Loan Corporation and home-builders under the Federal Housing Administration and allied agencies.

The South, because of its relatively high percentage of farm tenancy, stands to gain most if the bill is enacted. Almost 3,000,000 families in this section are classed as tenants or share-croppers. It can readily be seen what a tremendous advantage it would be for the South if even a small proportion of this group could become independent farmers.

In comparison to the potential advantages, the $50,000,000 of Federal funds necessary for the program would be minor indeed. The bulk of the financing would be borne by the public. Since there is ample private capital available and since the HOLC bonds are selling at a premium, there should be no difficulty in finding ready investors.

So far the only formidable opposition to the Bankhead bill, which is sponsored in the House by Representative Jones of Texas, is confined to those who see in it a tendency toward Socialism. It has been pointed out many times that a number of countries, including England and Denmark, have long since inaugurated similar movements with marked success.

Far from being a trend toward Socialism or Communism, the tenant farm bill would make possible a bulwark against such tendencies. At present the tenant farm population constitutes a definite liability and a potential threat to democracy. It is fertile ground for the fantastic promises of the Huey Longs, the Upton Sinclairs and the Dr. Townsends and is usually the first to respond to such movements.

Since tenant farmers and share-croppers pay practically no taxes directly they have little if any interest in the conduct of government, being a prey to back-slappers, baby-kissers and demagogues of various degrees. Make it possible for these people to own their own farms and share in both the benefits and the responsibilities of citizenship, their interests will likewise change.

A share-cropper with no property except a skillet and a mule, and sometimes not even that, is open to the promises and dreams of every rascal that comes along. The same share-cropper, once he owns forty acres and a house, becomes as capitalistic as John Pierpont Morgan.

The share-croppers and tenant farmers have little voice to speak for themselves. But it is not their interest alone that would be served by passage of the Bankhead bill. Every individual who makes his home in a community within trading distance of a tenant farmer has a direct interest in it, and that includes all of us in the South.

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# SHARECROPPERS' AID OBJECTIVE OF SPEECH

## Lecturer Brought About Co-operative Farm

Furthering a movement to aid sharecroppers and tenant farmers of the south, Sherwood Eddy will address the Memphis public at 2:30 o'clock Sunday afternoon at First Methodist Church.

Mr. Eddy, author, lecturer and world traveler with headquarters in New York, recently made a trip through the south that resulted in establishing a co-operative farm on a 2,138 acre tract of land in Mississippi, for evicted sharecroppers and tenant farmers.

Of his trip through Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee, Mr. Eddy says he found "peonage, serfdom, poverty, disease and sometimes terror and violence."

With the aid of associates, Mr. Eddy has acquired a tract near Hillhouse, Miss. The property includes 600 acres ready for cultivation with room for 100 families. Already 22 families, including negroes, have settled on the place.

An open forum will follow his address, "What's Wrong With Our World and What Can We Do to Right It?" Sunday. Dr. George Stoves, pastor, will deliver the opening prayer and the Rev. J. J. Walker, pastor of East End Christian Church, will preside. Mr. Walker emphasized that the meeting is not religious in nature.

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# An American Peasantry?

(Montgomery Advertiser)

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General

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

## BANKHEAD AND REPEAL

**It is a logical sequence of events that President Roosevelt should have asked Congress for immediate repeal of the Bankhead cotton act, along with the tobacco and potato regulation acts. The Supreme Court's decision declaring the Agricultural Adjustment Administration statutes unconstitutional was in effect, a death blow to these subsidiary enactments which the court declares exceed the federal government's authority of taxation for the benefit of special groups. Following the court's decision it was settled that such aid as is given the farmer must be in accord with the Constitution, and without discriminations or penalties which prove unjust to others, aid which it is generally recognized the farmer is entitled to and should receive.**

**In the cotton regions of the south where the Bankhead act has been in operation, it has been contended by many that it was objectionable and that it was also impractical in a number of ways, aside from its unconstitutional character. The most frequent complaint made against it was that it operated to the disadvantage of the smaller producer and the tenant farmer and share-cropper and was unduly favorable to the large producer. Another contention was that it encouraged dishonesty by making it so easy to misrepresent acreage and production records.**

**So far as Alabama is concerned, it has been repeatedly pointed out by The Journal that legislation in the interest of the cotton producer must consider primarily the small producer because there are so many of them in Alabama. Forty-seven per cent, or 122,000 farms in Alabama, produce an average of only two bales of cotton which is one-fourth of the state's entire production. Thirty-four thousand farms produce only one bale each. Any law which neglects to recognize the primary right of such farms as those to consideration in providing the bare necessities of living is bound to be regarded as not fully covering the farmer's needs in a state such as Alabama. Exemptions from the law's hardships for these small farmers might have silenced some of the early criticism, which brought from Senator Russell of Georgia the assertion that the law was the "worst thing that has happened to the state of Georgia since Sherman's march to the sea," and from Senator Smith of South Carolina, one of the cotton authorities of the senate, the comment that the act ought to be repealed "in toto." When under the law, and after wide protests some exemptions were granted for the benefit of the small producer, the relief was ganted only to land with a base production record, and that was impossible for most small farmers to establish. The result was that the small farmer, the man most urgently in need of aid has still suffered under the law's heavy penalties to a distressful degree. Alabama's farmers, particularly those who raise merely enough to provide a small cash crop for necessities, will likely be gratified that the farm relief problem is about to be approached from a more equitable point of view for the smaller man who constitutes such a major part of Alabama citizenship.**

## *A Supreme Court Bill*

A vote of at least seven of the nine justices of the Supreme Court would be required before a law could be held unconstitutional, according to a bill presented in Congress Monday by Senator Pope, Idaho Democrat. The senator, an *Associated Press* story reports, "said the people by their votes had approved the AAA program and added he did not propose to see the nation under the absolute rule of nine men however wise."

Unless this paper is mistaken, it was the farmers affected, rather than the people as a whole, who specifically approved the AAA program by their votes. Furthermore it wonders whether the nation, because of recent decisions of the Supreme Court, regards itself as under the "absolute rule of nine men."

*The Age-Herald* believes the AAA accomplished great benefits not only for the farmers but for the country as a whole. It deplored the invalidation of the act. Nevertheless, it regards the nation as under the rule of the constitution rather than of nine men.

Properly the court is called upon at times to interpret that constitution, but its interpretation, this paper believes, is determined by its sincere conception of the meaning and intent of the basic law, rather than by personal factors. The judges being human, temperamental and other inclinations may exert subconscious influence, but that the integrity of the court is beyond question is the evident conviction of the American people.

It also seems apparent lately that despite the great popular support for laws that have been invalidated by the Supreme Court, slighting and humorous references to the "nine old men" are neither so numerous as they were nor so "funny" as they seemed not long ago to some people. Strange as it may seem, it appears that the American people generally and H. L. Mencken, for once at least, are in basic agreement. In their respective general attitudes toward the court, it seems likely that Mr. Mencken and the average citizen walk arm in arm.

Writing recently in *The Baltimore Evening Sun* concerning "the current clamor for a 'reform'" of the court, Mencken declared "the American people, in the long run, always decide in favor of the court, and with sound reason."

"The Supreme Court," asserts the sage of Baltimore, "is anything but sacrosanct. Once it has spoken, its members have no more rights than any other citizen. They may be criticized freely, and even denounced, in good humor or bad.

"But to say that they sometimes come to judgments which rational men may plausibly challenge is certainly not to say that it would be an improvement to abolish or diminish their function. There have been, within historic times, stupid men among them, but there has never been, I think, a downright rogue. They do their level damnedest, and angels could do no more. If they err grossly, their error may be corrected in due course, and by constitutional means. If they go counter to an overwhelming public opinion, whether better than their own or worse, they may be brought to heel. But so long as the republic endures, we'll have to have them, or something like them."

As for Senator Pope's bill, arguments are plentiful both for and against it.

If it be said that under the present decisions by a simple majority the tremendous power to uphold or kill a law is sometimes reposed in one man, then it can be replied that the change suggested by Senator Pope would not alter that possibility. The vote of one justice still might bring a total up to or reduce it from the necessary seven.

If it is rather upsetting to have an act regarded by four members of the court as valid, thrown out, then it can be answered that to have a law held constitutional which six justices of the court regard as unconstitutional, would also be unfortunate.

If this paper correctly senses the present tendency of public sentiment, the people as a whole are rather strongly inclining toward leaving the Supreme Court and its procedure as they are.

## *A Matter Of Course*

President Roosevelt's recommendation that Congress repeal the Bankhead cotton, Kerr-Smith tobacco and the potato control acts, of course, in line with the plain implications of the Supreme Court's AAA decision. After that ruling, there was little if any doubt that those laws would not stand the constitutional test. So, obviously, the proper and clarifying thing to do was to move for the repeal of these acts.

That, undoubtedly, was the determining consideration behind the president's recommendation.

However, Mr. Roosevelt, incidentally may not have been unmindful of the effect that such a move by him might have on those critics who charge that the administration has not been sufficiently constitution-minded.

# ENSLAVEMENT HIT IN FARM TENANCY

**Three Georgians Expected To Be Named Officials of Group Today.**

**JACKSON, Miss., Feb. 6.—(AP)—Farm tenancy, termed a breeder of revolution, must be curbed if the soil tillers of the south are to avoid becoming the prey of propagandists and agitators, Wilson Gee, agricultural expert from the University of Virginia, told delegates attending the thirty-seventh annual conference of the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers here today.**

"Do away with farm tenancy if you want an antidote to revolutionary agitators," Gee declared after warning against the dangers of "economic enslavement."

The more than 800 farm leaders gathered here from 13 southern states heard plans earlier in the day for converting some 3,000,000 acres of cotton land into pastures as a means of increasing economical live stock production, improve dairying and lend impetus to soil erosion program.

The conference will end tomorrow afternoon with election of officers. L. R. Neel, of Atlanta, editor of the Southern Agriculturist, is expected to be advanced to the association's presidency, succeeding J. R. Ricks, dean of Mississippi State College, at Starkville.

Similar advancement of J. A. Evans, of the Georgia Extension Service, from the second to the first vice presidency, is anticipated, and Ward H. Sachs, of Atlanta, likely will be reelected secretary-treasurer.

**ALLOTMENT PLAN URGED FOR FARMERS**

**NEW ORLEANS, Feb. 6.—(AP)—J. E. McDonald, commissioner of agriculture of Texas, today advocated the adoption of the domestic allotment plan as the best way of maintaining foreign markets for American cotton.**

McDonald addressed the members of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange at the close of trading on the market today.

"We have to keep in mind the value of the cotton farms of the south," McDonald told the brokers. "Related industries such as oil mills, cotton gins, futures and spot business are all dependent on the maintenance of our foreign markets for American cotton.

"There are only two ways to maintain those markets. One would be the tearing down of tariff walls, which is generally considered impossible. The other would be through the medium of the domestic allotment plan."

McDonald said that cotton farmers should be allowed to grow as much cotton as they wished. For a certain portion of their crop they would be paid the world price plus a government subsidy. For the remainder they would receive the price current in world markets.

He said this would allow cotton to flow into world channels of trade and

still maintain a good price for the amount of cotton the farmer grows for American consumption.

Raleigh, N. C. Observer
January 28, 1936

## Lost From The Land

There could be no more profoundly disturbing news in the South than that the Southern Negro is being separated from the Southern land. Yet that is the news which comes from the recent census of agriculture for North Carolina. Year after year in the past the number of Negro farmers increased, but between 1925 and 1935 a total of 11,593 Negro farmers disappeared from the North Carolina land.

There is no compensating value in the fact that while the number of Negro farmers so sharply decreased the number of white farmers increased by nearly 29,000. It may be a good thing for white men to return to the land, or to go to it for the first time, but any change in human life in the South which ends the farming of Negroes and turns them into new additions to the black proletariat of Southern cities, or makes them into a new rural proletariat, dependent only upon seasonable and uncertain farm wages, is a change full of disturbing possibilities for the South.

The cause and meaning of this change ought to be carefully considered. Prof. S. H. Hobbs, Jr., of the University of North Carolina, thinks that "perhaps the main explanation is that this is a product of the crop adjustment administration." If so, it is a sad commentary upon human nature that some men would use a system designed to save all as an excuse for hogging benefits while cutting tenants loose from farming and a chance to benefit by the program. But Professor Hobbs may be a long way from correct in this instance. Of the 11,593 Negro farmers who in ten years have disappeared, 4,093 were lost from the land between 1925 and 1930, long before the adjustment program was begun, a number large enough certainly to indicate the already vigorous beginnings of a definite trend. Indeed, if there had been no acceleration at all in the trend of 1925-30, the decrease in Negro farmers in North Carolina in the ten-year period from 1925 to 1935 would have amounted to 9,186, as compared with the actual decrease of 11,593. That there has been some selfish subterfuge under the adjustment campaign by which tenants were deprived of their share in the benefits cannot be doubted. But Professor Hobbs chose poor evidence with regard to such selfish sabotage of the adjustment system in these figures.

As the professor suggests, the full meaning of the figures is far from clear. But their importance is as clear as it is disturbing. As long as the Negro is in the South—which is forever—both he and the South are best served if he is securely attached to the soil. Tear him loose from it, se[t] him adrift upon the South's roa[ds], or crowd him into its slums and the result will not be a better South.

## The Call For Repeal Of The Ba[nk]head Law

President R[oosev]elt has requested Congress to repeal [the] Bankhead cotton control law, the Kerr-[Smi]th tobacco control law and the potato [con]trol law. This recommendation is made, he says, because of the termination of th[e] agricultural production adjustment act, [to] which the three acts mentioned were [a]u[xiliar]y."

This is the sensib[le thi]ng to do. There was no question, after [the] Supreme Court's invalidation of the AAA [tha]t these crop control laws governing [co]tton, [tobac]co and potatoes were unconstitu[tional. T]he Supreme Court has not acted on a[ny of th]e three laws in question, but there could be no doubt that it would hold them unconstitutional.

The court has before it a case brough[t by] Gov. Talmadge, of Georgia, against [the] Bankhead act. While technically it mi[ght] be possible to continue the Bankhead [act] in effect until a decision by the court, and to have it operative on this year's crop, an adverse decision on the act in the Talmadge case, which might come at any time, would be upsetting.

The best thing to do is to repeal these laws promptly, and it may be taken for granted that Congress will comply with the president's request without delay.

Birmingham News 2-4-36

# Tuskegee Graduate On Sharecroppin'

**By C. C. BRANDEN, SR.**
**Director General of Interdenominational Missions of Augusta, Ark.**

The masses of Israel, at one time, lost respect for reason, and we find Isaiah addressing them: "Come now, let us reason together."

The prophet felt that if he could get his people to spare time for sober reasoning, their afflictions would be healed thereby. I have that same thought when the troubles in East Arkansas, between landowners and sharecropping tenants come up. The occasion for sober inquiry and faithful listening is seldomly more pronounced than now. So, let's reason over the things highly calculated to mislead thousands of our innocent farm-life citizens.

A recent Associated Press report carried the statements: "The share-cropping system is wrong, rotten from top to bottom, and there is only one remedy—quit share-cropping." And: "This system is the product of our Reconstruction Period, where it worked well, but now it is outworn, and should be discarded."

The worthy character who made these remarks recognized that the landowners and their tenants were highly wrought up about share-cropping matters. He knew the farmers, generally, were bankrupt, and that the tenant situation was usually as bad, or even worse. So, therefore, as a remedy for the whole malady, he suggested that the South quit share-cropping, and discard the outworn system. Leave nothing, probably is his thought, for the men to quarrel about, and so that all should have peace.

Advertiser

This reveals a fancy, in the mind of a worthy citizen, that is born of the deepest misunderstanding. The problem is not that simple. It cannot be solved through discarding the system. People generally do not seem to know the proper place and purpose of the share-cropping system.

At the end of the War Between the States, unnumbered thousands of ex-slaves were left wholly unemployed. And practically all of these were densely ignorant, without the simplest means of livelihood; and, worst of all, they were lacking in initiative and disposition to make their support without personal supervision. With these definite conditions facing them, the owners of the ex-slaves formulated the system that has worked up to this day, greatly to the advantage of both the share-cropper tenants and the farm owners.

2-22-36

These three considerations, together with the farmers' surplus land, gave birth to our present share-cropping system. And these very same considerations exist largely today, hence the system must continue indefinitely. In this system we have yet millions of faithful souls, qualified only for their making the elementary contributions to the nation's economic welfare. How, otherwise, could these humble citizens provide for themselves, if we discard the share-cropping system? Through good-will, and better understanding, we should seek to improve all phases of the system, but the institution itself must stand.

Montgomery,

From the foregoing analysis one may observe clearly the factors that make up the character of citizens who fit best into the working plans of the share-cropping system. It is important that we, especially tenants, do not overlook these distinct factors, or the conditions that called the system into life.

All farm citizens should know, as well as we should know our multiplication tables, the type of persons best qualified for share-cropping services. When the proper type of tenants—those qualified only to make elementary contributions to their economic welfare—fills the share-croppers' place on the farm, the operation is peaceful. And, according to the original purposes, the results are usually profitable to all concerned.

But, if any other pattern drops in, or if a once ideal share-cropper makes, as he should, changes in his distinct type factors, through individual improvement, and thereafter lingers too long in the system, as one should not do, the farm has trouble. Or, in other words, if either the farm owners or the tenants behave so as to render the institution other than a mutual arrangement, for the mutual welfare of both, then the system gets its initial start towards troubles.

Our great masses are yet too largely uneducated, and too largely without the necessary means for independent farming, to discard share-cropping. And, if we should take our East Arkansas wrangling as an index, we might well feel that many, even this late, do not possess the intelligence to make their support without personal supervisions. Let us reason in terms of our homes. I feel that no parents would pay or would organize to keep their big, ambitious sons in the kindergarten class. They would think, however, that faithful citizens should organize, and should pay money to raise their standards of life, that they should buy land, make modern farms and educate. But no true-hearted, thoughtful man will create a community disturbance, fuss and fight, to claim a kindergarten chair.

* * * *

Most farm owners encourage their industrious tenants to buy land, and to do independent farming. My letter is long, but let me mention a few examples, at random. At Augusta, Ark., we have Henry Spearman, who for a number of years was a share-cropper. He now owns his home, and is general supervisor on the Conner plantation, three miles east. Spearman makes an independent living, and is able to advance his church association financial help, any day in the year. Down at Gregory, we have John Bledsoe. Farmer Bledsoe proved an exceptional share-cropper for a long period, on the R. T. Harvill plantation, but now he is master of his own household. He owns a splendid farm and home, where you see, almost invariably, all the things a first-rate farmer is supposed to have. Bledsoe makes an independent living, but Mr. Harvill, his former landlord, still holds out to him an ever-helping hand.

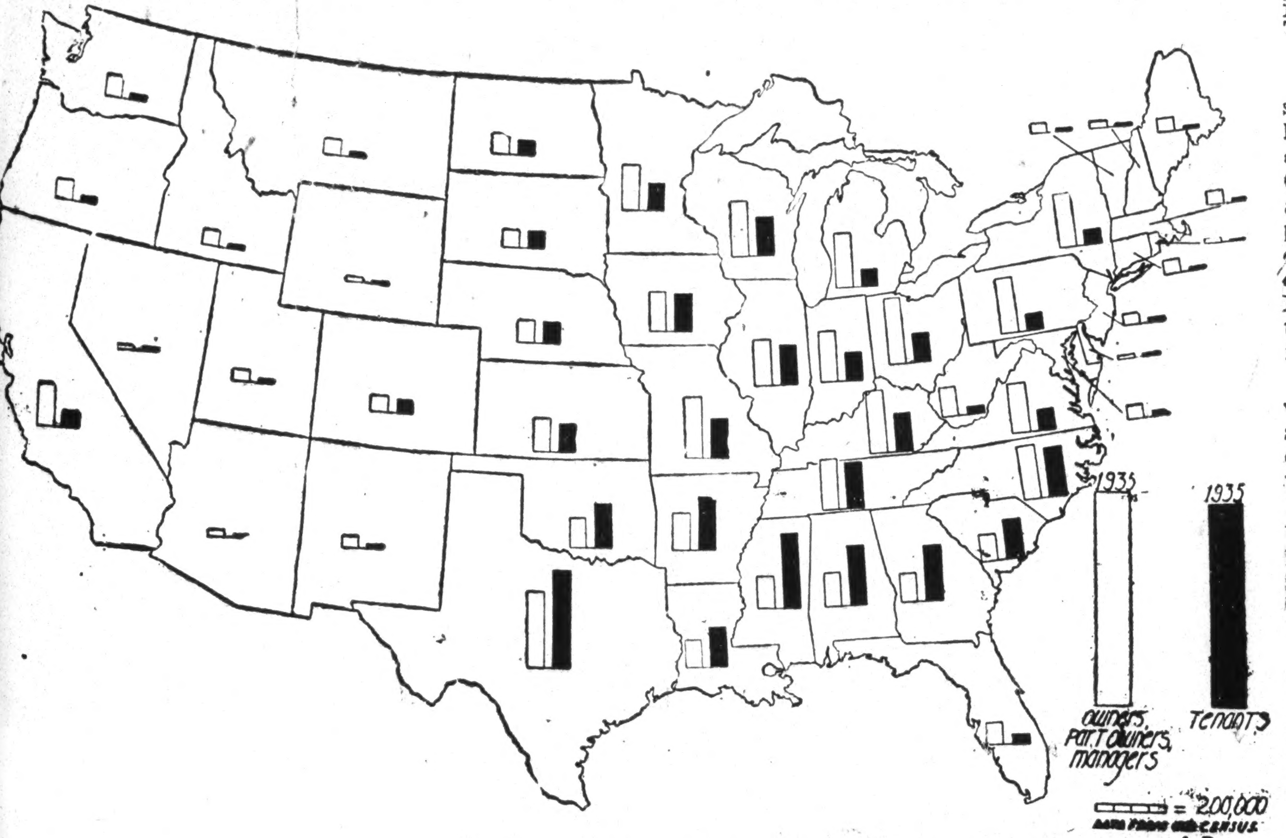
Over at Proctor, Ark., we have A. B. Owens. Many years ago this prosperous farmer was a share-cropper, but later on he came to be manager of the Scott plantation and cotton gin, down in Tunica County, Miss. Some 20-odd years ago Farmer Owens moved across the Great Father of Waters, settling in Crittenden County. Here he owns and operates a modern farm of several hundred acres of delta land. Nothing in the history of the Negro's matchless advancement is more truly the background than is share-cropping, and nothing has been more productive of genuine happiness for the masses than farm life.—Vicksburg Post-Herald.

Agriculture-1936

General

Condition of

# Map Shows Farm Tenancy's Spead In U. S.




Varying from a minimum of six per cent in Massachusetts to a maximum of 70 per cent in Mississippi, the farm tenant system now spreads to every state in the Union, as shown by this map prepared by the University of Arkansas' Department of Rural Economics and Sociology. The white columns indicate the number of farm owners, part owners and managers; the black columns, the number of farm tenants.

# Tenancy Report Advocates Easier Credit As Initial Step To Solve Problem

Commercial Appeal

## Traces Growth of System That Tends Toward Abuse of Land, "Economic Insecurity" In Arkansas Study for Roosevelt Commission

BY ROBERT TALLEY

The collapse of the Civil War in April, 1865, which left the bankrupt southern planter with his idle land and the hungry negro with his labor may have freed the bonds of several million black slaves but it fastened upon the nation—and particularly the south—an economic problem, the answer to which is still being sought until this good day.

Behind the investigation of the status of the sharecropper and the tenant farmer, now being made at the behest of President Roosevelt, is the story of an economic system that had its roots in that internecine conflict and which has continued to grow and spread through all the years since Appomattox.

12-27-36

It was born in the south with the freeing of the slaves, it expanded in the west as the advancing railroads found it both advisable and profitable to rent out a large portion of their huge land grants, it spread to the east as the idea of renting a part of their acreage caught the fancy of farmers as far distant as New England—with the result that today the tenant farmer and the landlord are found in every state in the Union.

### Farm Owners Decrease

Tenancy, of course, is most prevalent in the south. The percentage of tenant farmers in relation to the total number ranges from a minimum of six per cent in Massachusetts to a maximum of 70 per cent in Mississippi. During the 55 years between 1880 and 1935, the total number of tenant farmers in the United States increased 1,840,699 while the number of farm owners increased only 963,090.

Narrowing it down to the states in the Mid-South, one finds these U. S. Census Bureau figures for 1935:

| | —TENANTS— Number | Per Cent |
|---|---|---|
| Alabama | 176,247 | 64 |
| Arkansas | 151,956 | 60 |
| Louisiana | 108,377 | 64 |
| Mississippi | 217,564 | 70 |
| Tennessee | 126,607 | 46 |

### Mississippi Total Larger

For the same year, Georgia showed 66 per cent; South Carolina, 62 per cent; Oklahoma, 61 per cent; Texas, 57 per cent; North Carolina, 47 per cent; with other southern states showing smaller percentages. The number of share croppers exceeds the number of other tenants in only one state, Mississippi, although croppers and tenants are about equally divided in North Carolina and Georgia.

The trend in farm tenancy, which has commonly been upward since the Civil War, was slightly downward from 1930 to 1935 in all these states except Tennessee and Kentucky, which apparently means that some of the tenants or croppers in the cotton belt during depression years became wage laborers on farms paying cash wages or on government rolls.

All these figures, as well as the others that follow, are taken from an analytical study of the entire farm tenancy situation throughout the United States by the University of Arkansas and supplied to The Commercial Appeal through the courtesy of C. O. Brannen, assistant director of research. Completed recently for Governor Futrell's Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission which met at Hot Springs, this study became a part of the commission's report to President Roosevelt's investigators of the tenant problem who are scheduled to make their recommendations late in January.

### Number Grows

While the freeing of the slaves at the time of the Civil War caused a great increase in tenancy and gave birth to the system 70 years ago, the prevalence of negroes in the south is no longer a satisfactory explanation of the high rate of tenancy, says the University of Arkansas' report. In recent years, the number of white tenants has greatly increased.

The rate of tenancy in Oklohoma is higher than in Arkansas, despite the fact that in the former state only 5.2 per cent of all farmers are negro tenants as compared with 56 per cent white tenants. In Texas, 10.2 per cent of all farmers are negro tenants, as compared with 46.9 per cent white tenants. In the south as a whole, only 18.4 per cent of all farmers are negro tenants, whereas 35.2 per cent of all farmers are white tenants. Iowa has 50 per cent tenancy, a rate almost as high as Arkansas, with only 135 negro farmers in the entire state.

### Crops Simpler

"A better explanation of tenancy in the south," says the University of Arkansas' report, "is the production of cotton, tobacco and sugar cane. "The routine of the production and management of these crops is much simpler than in handling production of a diversified farm, both for landowner and tenant. The rate of tenancy is high in all countries where the system of farming is based primarily on cotton, tobacco and sugar cane."

In Arkansas, for example, the number of white tenants (other than croppers) increased from 55,021 to 67,194 in the period between 1930 and 1935 while the number of negro tenants decreased from 22,636 to 18,962. White share croppers decreased from 29,596 to 24,625 while the number of negro croppers decreased from 45,465 to 40,978.

Let's take a look at the various types of tenant farmers so we may understand them better. Roughly says the University of Arkansas report, they divide into the following four classes, depending upon the nature of their contractual relations with the landowner:

Share Tenant—He furnishes all work, stock and equipment and pays the landlord a fractional part of the crops produced, usually one-fourth of the cotton and one-third of the grain. The landlord and tenant may contribute a portion of the current cost of seed, fertilizer and ginning, according to the share of the crop each receives.

Share Cropper—The cropper, common only to the south, furnishes only labor in producing and harvesting the crop, the landlord furnishing land, teams and equipment and varying degrees of management. Landlord and **tenant usually share the cost of seed and ginning, in proportion** to the share of the crop received by each.

Cash Tenant—He pays a cash rent per acre for the use of the land and operates the farm in about the same way as an owner.

Share-Cash Tenant—He pays a share of the cultivated crops to the land owner, but pays cash rent for the other land, such as pasture.

Why the huge number of tenant farmers in the United States, especially in the south, anyway? Well, it takes two to make a bargain—the tenant and the landowner—and here are the reasons, according to the University of Arkansas' survey, that motivate each:

The Land Owner's Point of View—The owner, because of illness or for business reasons, may be absent from the farm during which time he would like to offer his land for rent. He might, because of ill health or because of reduced family labor as his sons grow up and move away to the city, desire to reduce his farming activities by renting out part of his land.

Or, in case of a farm owner's death, the estate may be divided among the city heirs who have no desire to operate the farm. Then, too, in periods of agricultural depressions, considerable farm lands pass into the hands of insurance companies and other mortgage holders who rent them out.

### More Economical

Several factors perhaps cause owners of land, who are not active farmers, to retain their ownership. The motives include sentiment for the old homestead, social prestige because of land ownership and desire for profits. In the south, owing to the large available labor supply, it has proved economical to operate land in large holdings upon the basis of tenancy. This is particularly true in the cotton, rice and sugar cane areas.

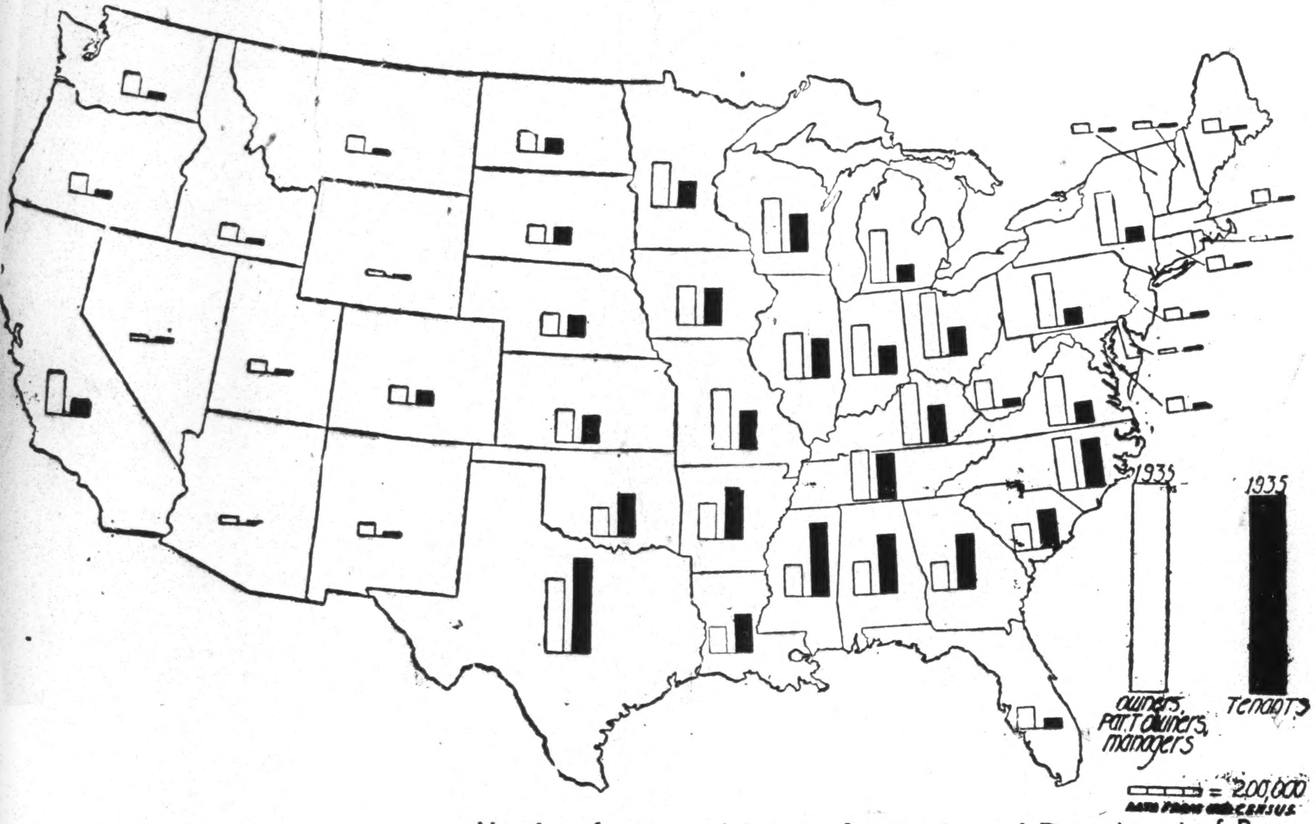
The Tenant's Point of View—For a number of reasons, many farmers prefere to rent land rather than buy it. They may expect to farm temporarily and later go into some other business, or a son or a son-in-law who expects to inherit a farm from which the owner has retired may prefer to rent it until that time comes.

While some farmers remain tenants deliberately, even though they have sufficient money to purchase a farm, the great majority become tenants and remain such because they do not have sufficient cash or credit to purchase a farm and pro-

Agriculture-1936
Condition of

General

# Map Shows Farm Tenancy's Spead In U. S.




Varying from a minimum of six per cent in Massachusetts to a maximum of 70 per cent in Mississippi, the farm tenant system now spreads to every state in the Union, as shown by this map prepared by the University of Arkansas' Department of Rural Economics and Sociology. The white columns indicate the number of farm owners, part owners and managers; the black columns, the number of farm tenants.

# Tenancy Report Advocates Easier Credit As Initial Step To Solve Problem

Commercial Appeal

## Traces Growth of System That Tends Toward Abuse of Land, "Economic Insecurity" In Arkansas Study for Roosevelt Commission

BY ROBERT TALLEY

The collapse of the Civil War in April, 1865, which left the bankrupt southern planter with his idle land and the hungry negro with his labor may have freed the bonds of several million black slaves but it fastened upon the nation—and particularly the south—an economic problem, the answer to which is still being sought until this good day.

Behind the investigation of the status of the sharecropper and the tenant farmer, now being made at the behest of President Roosevelt, is the story of an economic system that had its roots in that internecine conflict and which has continued to grow and spread throughout the years since Appomattox.

12-27-36

It was born in the south with the freeing of the slaves, it expanded in the west as the advancing railroads found it both advisable and profitable to rent out a large portion of their huge land grants, it spread to the east as the idea of renting a part of their acreage caught the fancy of farmers as far distant as New England—with the result that today the tenant farmer and the landlord are found in every state in the Union.

### Farm Owners Decrease

Tenancy, of course, is most prevalent in the south. The percentage of tenant farmers in relation to the total number ranges from a minimum of six per cent in Massachusetts to a maximum of 70 per cent in Mississippi. During the 55 years between 1880 and 1935, the total number of tenant farmers in the United States increased 1,810,699 while the number of farm owners increased only 963,090.

Narrowing it down to the states in the Mid-South, one finds these U. S. Census Bureau figures for 1935:

| | —TENANTS— Number | Per Cent |
|---|---|---|
| Alabama | 176,247 | 64 |
| Arkansas | 151,956 | 60 |
| Louisiana | 108,377 | 64 |
| Mississippi | 217,564 | 70 |
| Tennessee | 126,607 | 46 |

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While some farmers remain tenants deliberately, even though they have sufficient money to purchase a farm, the great majority become tenants and remain such because they do not have sufficient cash or credit to purchase a farm and pro-

vide the necessary operating capital.

Under these conditions the would-be farm owner may use such capital as he has for farm operations by renting the land from others, hoping to accumulate enough capital of his own to purchase the land eventually. If he has no capital at all, he may prefere to become a cropper rather than remain a wage hand, with the hope of obtaining enough capital to become a renter.

### Want Good Land

Many tenants rent good land in preference to buying a poor farm, where they do not have enough capital to buy the former.

In summary, the University of Arkansas report classes tenants thusly:

1. Sharecroppers, who, in 1935, constituted 20.9 per cent of all tenants in the southern states.

2. A large group of farmers—including croppers—who, "because of personal limitations such as lack of education, thriftlessness and unwillingness to assume risk," have a doubtful future as to ultimate farm ownership.

3. A large group who are in the initial or intermediate step to ownership of a farm of their own.

4. A smaller group who, having become farm owners, made a failure of it and lost their ownership status.

5. Some who are financially able to purchase farms but prefer to remain as tenants, at least temporarily.

"The fact that tenancy is an important aspect in American agriculture and is growing in most of the states is not, within itself evidence that tenancy is a problem," continues the university's report. "Some would contend, perhaps, that farm tenancy is both a logical and desirable development. Others are skeptical of the ultimate effects of our system of tenancy on agriculture and rural population, even though it should not become more dominant than at present."

### Bad for Soil

What are the more obvious effects of the tenant system!

In first place, says the university's report, is the matter of soil conservation. The interests of the tenant—who is renting the land only temporarily and for all he can get out of it—are contrary to the practices which will conserve and improve the soil. His sole interest is to obtain the maximum yield each year, and let the future go to hang.

The effect, from the viewpoint of the landowner, is depletion of the soil and a reduced basis of agricultural production. There is abundant evidence to show that the percentage of soil-depleting crops is higher on tenant farms than on owner-operated farms.

In the second place, says the university's report, farm tenancy is a threat to economic and social security. The farmer who owns his land, or is purchasing it, is building wealth for the future needs and for his protection in old age.

In the third place, tenancy is associated with instability of farm occupation or location. It is obvious that tenants change farms and communities more than others and such mobility is detrimental to the formation of a closely-knit social life in the community, the development of good schools, good churches, co-operative associations and political responsibilities.

And in the fourth place, continues **the report, desirable standards of living are difficult—often impossible**—under the standards of tenancy. Experience shows the housing of tenants is commonly at a low standard. This is not entirely due to the lack of wealth on the part of the tenant, as the landlord is not likely to provide good houses and the tenant could not be expected to improve another's property at his own expense.

### More Responsible

"It is probably true," says the report, "that home ownership is closely associated with good citizenship, in the sense that permancy in location will lead to interest in community institutions. . . . The home owner is likely to assume more responsibility than the tenant in promoting desirable political, economic and social institutions. There are, no doubt, other detrimental effects of tenancy, but these disadvantages would seem to establish the fact that tenancy is a problem."

And what about meeting this problem?

Until recently, says the report, most of the suggestions for meeting this time-honored problem have sought to bring about more desirable contractual relations between landlord and tenant. Among the suggestions have been a long-time tenant contract, a more accurate division of the crop, proposals to reimburse the tenant for improvements he would make on the property, etc. Taxation also has been suggested to discourage large holdings of land.

"While these and other methods might be helpful," concludes the report, "they do not eliminate all the detrimental effects of farm tenancy. The only method of attack on the problem, it seems—if the major disadvantages of the system are to be eliminated—is to being about less tenancy and more ownership for the farmers who cultivate the land.

"If this is to be the means of solving the tenant problem, success will depend primarily upon a system of financing land purchase which can be utilized by tenants.

"Credit must be provided with low initial payments, low interest rates, and a long period for amortization. This method of financing on a comprehensive basis could require, no doubt, a new government corporation. The Bankhead bill introduced at the last session of Congress was a proposal in this direction.

"In addition to financing the farms, it would be necessary to restrict land transfer under such purchases and to provide guidance in farm operations for such owners. On first thought, several objections would be raised to such a plan. The first objection, perhaps, would be the size of the undertaking. Could a financing system be developed which would make farm owners out of 2,865,134 tenants in the United States, or the 151,759 tenants in Arkansas?

"A second contention would be that many tenants, because of their low abilities, could never become successful farm owners. Both of these objections, however, can be eliminated by proceeding on the basis of selection of the best tenants, which would greatly reduce the amount of funds needed and eliminate, insofar as farm ownership is concerned, the incompetent classes.

### Restrict Sale

"A third objection is that such farmers would lose their ownership and revert to tenancy. This possibility can be eliminated by a provision in the purchase contract which would prevent independent action on the part of the owner in the sale of the farm. Another safeguard would be to limit such purchases to economic units of sufficient size and quality to sustain a satisfactory standard of living for the farmer."

The objection can hardly be raised that the w hole scheme is impractical, asserts the report. A similar system has been adopted and carried out in Denmark and Ireland where farm tenancy became so grave that drastic agrarian reforms were made in order to convert tenants into owners. The governments, themselves, dealt with the problem of providing land for small farmers and the movement is meeting with success.

"The essential conditions that lie back of similar efforts in this country," concludes the University of Arkansas report, are: (1) realization that a tenancy problem exists and a desire to find a solution for it, and (2) a determination to initiate and direct a carefully considered plan which is adaptable to the needs of agriculture and farmers in the different states."

Brunswick, Ga., News
December 29, 1936

## LOCAL NEGROES TO PRESENT PAGEANT

On Friday, January 1, the Brunswick Memorial Emancipation Committee will present a pageant entitled, "Out of the Dark," which shows the progress of the negro from the dark days of Africa up to this present day. It is the first time that a celebration of this kind has ever been attempted by the committee and it is believed that it will prove to be a very attractive presentation to the entire population of this city.

A chorus of 30 voices will furnish the music and a number of the best talent in the city is being trained for the pageant, which will be presented at the colored Memorial School auditorium at 7 p. m.

An added attraction will be the ex-slave dinner which will be held at 5 p. m. on the same day.

Agriculture—1936
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General.

# Cites President Has Expressed Determination To Secure Laws To Aid Worthy Tenants Buy Land

Jan 26—36
Constitution
Atlanta, Ga

## Bankhead-Jones Measure Similar to Land Laws Long in Force in England and Denmark.

1-26-36

*Editor's Note: Clarence Poe, born in Chatham county, North Carolina, has been editor of the Progressive Farmer since 1899. He is the holder of doctor's degrees from Wake Forest College, the University of North Carolina and Washington College, Maryland, and is a member of the board of trustees of North Carolina State College of Agriculture, the University of North Carolina and Wake Forest College. The views expressed in the following article are those of the writer, and are not necessarily those of The Constitution:*

CLARENCE POE.

The President of the United States has recently expressed renewed determination to secure from congress legislation designed to help worthy tenants become landowners. Senator Bankhead, of Alabama, and Representative Marvin Jones, of Texas, have drafted a tentative measure and are willing to consider improvements in it. My purpose now is to appeal to all southern business and professional men to join the south's agricultural leadership in working out the best possible program of tenant aid.

In inaugurating some such aggressive policy for promoting home ownership, the United States would only be doing what the foremost European nations have been doing for a generation. Just what phases have worked best there became a matter of interest for me as early as 1912, when I made a trip to Europe to study the whole subject at first hand.

In Denmark, for example, I found that the government would lend 90 per cent of the purchase price of a piece of land and charge 3 per cent interest, with an amortization installment of 1 per cent a year for 50 years. That is to say, 4 per cent for a period of 50 years would pay off the debt, the government advancing 90 per cent of the money.

**THE ENGLISH PLAN.**

In conservative England I found that a man could buy a home at a low rate of interest by paying one-fifth cash and have 50 years in which to pay the remainder.

In Ireland I found that tenants were buying farms with purchase money advanced by the British government at an interest rate of only 2 3-4 per cent, with an amortization installment of only one-half of 1 per cent. This meant that the total annual installment was only 3 1-4 per cent, and the purchaser had 68 years in which to pay it all off.

Throughout the last half century the blight of farm tenancy has overspread rural America at an appalling rate. In this 50-year period the percentage of tenancy in the United States has increased from 26 per cent to 42 per cent. In other words, the number of tenants in 1880 was right at one-fourth of the total number of farmers in the United States; now it is getting in sight of one-half of the total.

Plainly then the next big question we all must face is this: If these farmers who have owned land themselves, and so had to pay no rent—if they have not been able to hold the land they owned, how can we expect tenants to acquire homes unless some special long-time low-interest help such as the Bankhead-Jones bill centemplates, is given them by the federal government?

**HIGH INTEREST RATE.**

The tenant has to pay from one-fourth to one-half of his crop to the man from whom he rents his land. Now what chance has such a man to acquire a home under the usual short-term, five or ten-year purchase plan, if so often during the last 50 years the farmer living on his own land has been unable to keep title to it? For in addition to the fact that the tenant has to pay one-fourth, one-third, or one-half of all he makes as rent, he has to pay an interest rate that runs as high as 40 to 60 per cent per annum on the price of things he has to buy under our crop-lien, "time prices" system of tenant credit.

Unless something is done, therefore, tenancy will continue to increase in the south—which means we shall continue to be the victims of about the worst system of tenancy on earth—the worst in its effects both on the man and on the land. For the harm done the land by our present system is appalling. Consider, for example, what a Scotch-born friend of mine, Martin McCall, said to me the other day. "Why, back in the old country," he said, "we'd think it a crime to rent land one year at a time with no provision for maintaining soil fertility. I know one farm near Perth that has been in the Reed family 400 years—and the Reeds are renters. But they have a lease for 99 years, and like nearly all Scotch-English leases, it provides for four things: Crop rotation, upkeep of fences, keeping live stock such as cattle and sheep, and conserving all manure."

**SHORT LEASES IN U. S.**

So in the old world we find leases running 99 years. Over here tenants do not even rent for 99 weeks—one year is the rule. Over there the tenant is rewarded for increasing soil fertility and penalized for soil improverishment. Here soil improvement is not rewarded; soil destruction is not penalized. And no provision is made for livestock or manure. Is it any wonder that the present rate of soil erosion and soil exhaustion alarms all thoughtful southerners?

From the standpoint of saving our soil or conserving our natural resources alone, therefore, legislation to help tenants become land owners deserves the support of the whole south. But such legislation is needed even more urgently to save men—to save men with ambition and yearning for better thangs. It is these men we must aid. What President Theodore Roosevelt said about the negro, "Help him if he stumbles, but if he lies down, let him stay," represents the correct attitude for the federal government to take toward every man, white or black, who calls on it for assistance.

The very fact that a family desires to own a home is evidence of an ambition that deserves encouragement. The man who gets out of the tenant class and obtains a deed to a piece of land, even if he will need 50 years to pay for it, is going to have a new self-respect, a new incentive to work and to save. Given this opportunity, he and his family will acquire a new attitude toward life and society, becoming better citizens of southern communities and better patrons of every southern business.

**GIVE THEM A CHANCE ...**

Among our tenant people there are vast numbers who for years have yearned for such an opportunity as this, men and women who deserve help and will make good. I do not think there is anything more unjust than the general assumption that the so-called "poor whites," the non-slaveholding whites of a former period or the landless whites of today (many of whom are descendants of slave owners and landowners, and many others themselves ex-landowners) are an inferior and thriftless class. Let us remember that when the Civil War came on the man whom the people of the north selected as their leader—Abraham Lincoln—was a man from this so-called poor white element of the south. And the man who succeeded Lincoln was a man born 300 yards from my office—Andrew Johnson, likewise a descendant of this often-slandered "poor white" class. Yet he measured up to the full stature of heroic statesmanship under perhaps the most trying circumstances any president has ever had to deal with.

Let us have faith in these landless people. Let us give them a chance. Not all will succeed, but vast numbers will, and the whole south as a result will be incalculably richer in soils, in wealth, in manhood and in dignity and hope.

**THREE BOOKS BY POE IN ATLANTA LIBRARY.**

Books by Clarence Poe, noted southern agriculturist, in the Carnegie library of Atlanta are "Farm Life, Problems and Opportunities;" "How Farmers Co-operate and Double Profits," and "Cotton: Its Cultivation, Marketing, Manufacture, and the Problems of the Cotton World," writte nin collaboration with C. W. Burkett.

"Culture in the South," published in 1934, is a regional study of unusual importance, giving a composite picture of the south in the form of a symposium to which 31 authorities contribute diverse views. Clarence Poe's chapter is on "The Farmer and His Future." This volume also is n the Carnegie library.

Marietta, Ga., Cobb County Times
January 30, 1936

# AWTREY'S COLUMN

By Bernard Awtrey

**THE TROUBLE WITH THE SOUTHERN COTTON FARMER**

The real trouble with the southern cotton farmer dates much further back than the present generation. It is much deeper rooted in our system than the tenant system. It is harmful both to the tenant and the landowner. It is very doubtful whether there will ever be a remedy found for it.

When I hitch my mule to a plow and go to the field as a laborer, I am placing my efforts, my strength, my knowledge of farming, my time and interest against the negro tenant in the next field. The cultivation of a cotton crop requires little scientific knowledge of the soil, or the seed, but much physical strength. Cotton is an easy crop to grow, makes with comparatively little effort except to keep down the grass and stir the soil occasionally. The negro can do this. He lives much cheaper than a self-respecting white man can or will live. He's adapted to the work and cares little for anything but a scant living from his time spent in making the crop. He adds little to the upkeep of his country in any way. His trade is worth little to business operations, his social standing adds nothing to his country, his educational instincts do not lead him to try to rise in the world. He constitutes a large percent of the agricultural workers in the southern cotton field—hence is a direct competitor of every white man that grows cotton.

**NEGRO SHOULD HAVE BEEN DEPORTED**

Some sections where there are large farms cultivated by him make good returns to the landowners, or did until their very success in growing cotton ruined their own prices. These now are as hard hit by the prevailing conditions as are the smaller farmers.

Had the government, when the negro was freed, sent him into a land somewhere else instead of making him a citizen among his former owners and a mill stone about the Southern farmers' neck, the South today would be the finest land in the world, cotton surpluses would be unknown and the nation would be reaping the advantage.

**EVIL EFFECTS OF NEGRO COMPETITION**

The evil effects of the negro's competition were not felt so badly for many years as they are now. The developing south lent opportunity in other lines for the young white man to make his way. Railroading, merchandising, the professions, and many others offered inducement to him to enter them and leave the farm to "Cuffey." But the white collar opportunities gradually filled up, our schools turned out numerous well-prepared young men, and women also entered this field. So there is now nothing left for the young farmer but to cope with the conditions of the farm, already overrun and filled with negro competitors. In this north Georgia country we see little of it in the immediate surroundings, but we are having to compete with negro labor in the wider fields of other southern sections where half the population is the negro race.

I have no suggestion to offer for a remedy, but am merely calling attention to what our southern white boys are up against. For fifty years my life has been spent in school work—this brought me in daily contact with the youth of the land. I feel keenly for the capable young men who are scurrying over the country hunting for something better than cultivating the soil. Any man of ordinary information, looking at the condition of farming interests, knows there is nothing to induce a capable white boy to spend his life on the farm. Sixty per cent of our farms heavily mortgaged, mortgaged beyond hope of redemption, presents a poor prospect, a doleful condition, with only one farmer in a hundred doing anything like well. "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey."

**UNIONS DO NOT PROTECT FARMER**

The cheap negro competition is not a factor in any other vocation than farming—he doesn't enter general business, nor the professions, to any harmful extent. Union Labor practically excludes him from competition in its line, but the poor farmer meets him at every turn in the road.

To have to compete with a race inferior in everything but physical strength, is the bane of the cotton producer.

**GOVERNMENT FARM CREDIT SYSTEM**

Is it ever possible to get one out of debt by loaning him money? Are the government agencies for benefitting the farmer a real help in the right direction? Do the land bank loans, the Production Credit Loans, and Seed Loans really help the average farmer? Or are they simply giving him an easier way of getting further into debt? Is he becoming dependent upon something else than himself for earning a living?

I am sometimes fearful that this is the case. This column has frequently said that the only way to really benefit the farmer is to furnish him a profitable market for his products and remove his tremendous tariff costs.

**SENATOR BORAH TAKES THIS STAND**

Senator Borah, the leading prospect right now for a presidential nomination by the Republican party, takes this stand in an article in the (February 1) Collier's Weekly. He practically admits the value of the "New Deal" as an emergency measure, but says permanent prosperity can come only by finding a market for farm products and giving the farmer reimbursement for what he pays to tariff. The New Deal does this, but to do so cuts his crops. It only goes half-way down the ladder—it should allow him freedom to produce all he can, but it should also find him a market for his products. But it's better to furnish him a good market for a half crop than a poor one for its whole.

**REDISTRIBUTION OF INCOME**

Senator Borah goes further and claims that what we need is not re-distribution of wealth but re-distribution of income. He says 20 per cent of our population receives 98 per cent of our national income, leaving 80 per cent of our population to get but two per cent of our national income.

**LET ME ILLUSTRATE**

I employ 10 men to work for me one day for $100. To two of them I give (two is 20% of ten) 98%—$49.00 each .........$ 98.00
To 8 I give 25c each, 8 times 25c .... 2.00

Total ............................$100.00

The senator intimates that capitalists themselves have a choice between a better division of income and Socialism or Communism.

The Democratic Administration has made an almost superhuman effort to get us better distribution of income.

Spartanburg S C Journal
January 6, 1936

## Tenancy Evils

"Tenancy, poverty and misuse of soil—the evil triplets of American agriculture have been with us for a long, long time, but we did nothing about them until recently we awoke and saw we must do something," said R. K. Greene, regional rehabilitation chief of resettlement administration in addressing a negro farmers' conference at Tuskegee Institute.

This tenant farmer problem is not restricted to any southern state nor to any race, creed or color. The big objective of the re-settlement program is to decrease tenancy and increase the number of farmers, white and colored, who own their own farmers. It is an experiment, but those who are vitally aware of this tragic problem that has hovered over the south from generation to generation hope success may attend the efforts put forth in that direction.

SALEM, ORE.
STATESMAN
FEB 16 1936

## Share-Croppers and AAA

SENATOR JOE ROBINSON was the spokesman for the new deal in its reply to Al Smith. He tried to hook Al up with the "money bags" of Wall Street, those wicked devils who seek to foil the efforts of the Sir Gallahad of the white house. Senator Joe failed to defend the workings of the new deal in his own state of Arkansas. There the crop reduction program has played havoc with human relations; has set sharecroppers adrift and left negroes without employment save on relief jobs.

Senator Joe can find plenty of words to sustain the white house in its thusts at capitalist employers; but he has no words in defense of the helpless poor whites and negroes of his own and other states, victims of the triple A program of restricted production. These share-croppers have formed a union, but apparently the national labor relations board has heard nothing about their distresses. Those who join this union are evicted, and blacklisted from getting other jobs. As the union executive secretary writes:

> "The struggles of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union against the domination of the landlords and planters in Arkansas and other states of the south and southwest have aroused the determined opposition of the plantation interests. Mass evictions of tenants who are members of the union have taken place on numerous plantations. Union meetings have been broken up by planters and officers of the law, while men, women and children have been kicked and flogged, shot, arrested and jailed."

Senator Joe has done nothing to stop the terrorism against these victims of the south's old economic order. He can find words to scourge some the the rich northerners who probably pay the highest wages of any factories in the world, but offers no criticism of the treatment accorded the share-croppers of his own southland.

One of the worst complaints against the AAA was its ruthless disregard of the interests of the workers dependent on normal farming operations—farm laborers, tenants, warehouse hands, boat and railroad and mill workers. These were cut off from their usual occupations, robbed of their livings already very precarious. Even the idealistic Secretary Wallace has overlooked this evil phase of crop reduction.

Agriculture-1936
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General.

# Would Save The Land But Sacrifice The Man

**The AAA substitute legislation now before Congress revolves around soil conservation, and while it would accomplish for the land-owner a large measure of what the Act outlawed by the Supreme Court was doing, those who drew up the new legislation failed to take into consideration the tenant, the share cropper or farm laborer.**

Journal and Guide

**Representative Tarver, of Georgia, added an amendment to the bill in the House, which was accepted, but when the measure was returned to the Senate for concurrence, this amendment met the opposition of Senator Smith, of South Carolina, and Republican leader McNary, of Oregon, with the result that it was automatically referred to committee, from whence it will, in all probability, emerge again without consideration for the problems of tenancy.**

3-29-36

**The trouble with farming as a whole and cotton farming in particular is not, by any means, impoverishment of the soil. The little volume, "The Collapse of Cotton Tenantry," containing in condensed form the findings of a commission which made a recent study of the problem, recites that in the 10 chief cotton growing states over 60 per cent of those engaged in the production of the crop are tenants, and places the number of families at 1,790,783, of whom 1,091,944 are white and 698,839 are colored. Pauperism, from the description of the condition of these families, would be a mild characterization.**

**It would seem to be important to the welfare of the Nation that these millions of unfortunate people should in some measure be rehabilitated, while the land is being reclaimed. Under the law, as Senator "Cotton Ed" Smith and Senator McNary and their followers want it passed, only the land-owners would profit. No protection is provided for the tenant, or share-cropper, or laborer. The benefits are to go directly and entirely to the land-owners.**

Norfolk, Va.

**It is not enough to leave the tenant to the discretion of the land-owner. Hard terms under which small land purchasing farmers have labored tells its own story.**

**Every passing decade since 1880 has shown an increase in tenancy until the total in 1930 reached 55.5 per cent for all farmers, it is plain on its face that unless future farm legislation looks to the protection of the workers as well as the landowners, we shall have in time a subsistence problem involving one-half of the South's population vastly more destructive of general prosperity than anything that has yet happened to the land, or its vested owners.**

# Farmers Veto AAA Proposals

Advertiser

## Subsidy For Cotton Lands Diversion At 6 Cents Recommended By Body

3-4-36

By JERRY GREENE
Associated Press Staff Writer

MEMPHIS, TENN., March 7.—(AP)—After two days of warm controversy, a committee of 30 farmers tonight overrode AAA suggestions and recommended to Secretary Wallace that payments for diversion of cotton lands to soil conserving crops in 1936 be at the rate of six cents a pound.

Montgomery

Immediately after the report, H. R. Tolley, former AAA administrator, told delegates to a regional farm conference he would recommend that the secretary follow, if possible, the committee's rate schedule.

"I fear," Tolley said, "that the carrying out of your full recommendations for diversion and rates of payments would stretch to the limit the amount of available funds. It appears to me that this diversion and payment recommendation would be in excess of the allotment of funds to be made to each State."

AAA officials repeatedly had suggested that the subsidy payment for turning cotton lands to soil conserving uses should be five cents a pound.

**$27,000,000 Hike**

Increasing the amount of payments to six cents a pound, officials estimated privately, probably would increase the cost of soil conservation in the South by about $27,000,000 for 1936.

For five hours today after other committees had reported recommendations concerning details of the new $500,000,000 program, several hundred farmers walked about a downtown hotel impatiently awaiting the rates of payment report. Much of the talk overheard from scattered groups concerned the question of the amount of cooperation the AAA might expect from farmers under the new plan.

Tolley adjourned the conference after telling delegates the AAA regulations for 1936 would be issued after conclusion of regional meetings in Salt Lake City and New York City next week.

The rates and conditions of payments committee recommended these minimum standards of performance for the South:

Requirement that farmers have planted in soil conserving crops an acreage of not less than 20 per cent of the acreage devoted to soil depleting crops.

**Soil Depleting Crops**

Requirement that the 1936 acreage of soil depleting crops be not in excess of a base acreage to be determined.

Requirement that farmers produce enough food and feed crops for home consumption to obtain a payment for diversion of lands which have been planted in these crops.

Advertiser 3-9-36

The committee recommended that the AAA use old plans for 1936 adjustment programs to fix the base acreage for cotton, tobacco and peanuts.

These were the recommendations for payments for diversion of soil depleting crops:

Montgomery, Ala.

Cotton, six cents a pound.

Flue cured and burley tobacco, five cents a pound.

Fire cured and dark air cured tobacco, three and one-half cents a pound.

Peanuts, one and one-half cents a pound.

Other soil-depleting crops, a basic rate similar to that established for the same crops in other States.

Soil maintenance payments for lands maintained in conserving crops would be 75 cents an acre. However, such payments would not be made on an acreage greater than 50 per cent of the acres in soil-depleting crops, and such payments should not constitute more than 50 per cent of the total payment for a farm.

**Diversion Of Crops**

Recommendations for diversion of crops in 1936 on individual farms were:

Cotton, a maximum of 40 per cent.

Tobacco, a maximum of 30 per cent.

Peanuts, a maximum of 20 per cent.

The committee said a farmer could not obtain a maintenance payment without diverting some soil depleting crops to conserving purposes. One subsidy payment a year was recommended.

Almost without debate, the delegates adopted a resolution urging Secretary Wallace to have "due consideration" for the small farmer. This was offered by a farmer delegate, a few hours after the conference overwhelmingly rejected an almost identical resolution offered by United States Senator-elect Allen J. Ellender, of Louisiana. Several farmers said they felt the resolution unnecessary but did not wish to leave the impression they favored overriding the small farmers.

The report was made after a prolonged farmer controversy behind closed doors of a committee room.

**Tentative Guide**

As the committee on payments concluded two days work to reach a unanimous agreement on subsidy recommendations, farmers awaiting the report said it may serve as a tentative guide for planting operations until the AAA issues formal regulations for 1936.

Reports seeping from the committee room indicated considerable differences of opinion concerning rates to be recommended. But, authoritative sources said, leaders pushed for approval of a flat payment of about 75 cents an acre for farmers who maintain the normal number of acres in soil conserving crops, plus payments of about five cents a pound for tobacco and cotton lands shifted to soil conserving purposes.

Farmer delegates speedily smashed a resolution offered by U. S. Senator-elect Allen J. Ellender of Louisiana urging Secretary Wallace to give "due consideration" to welfare of the small farmers in the new program. By both vocal and standing vote, the delegates by a heavy majority rejected the resolution. There was practically no debate.

Ellender said he believed the soil conservation act a "good law," but insisted the small "one horse" farmer be given a break. He suggested that provision be made to give small farmers an adequate minimum requirement for shifting crop lands to obtain payments. This, he said, would permit them to share fairly in subsidy payments without having to lose a substantial part of their income from cash crops.

**Adverse Vote**

Following the voting, H. R. Tolley, former assistant AAA administrator presiding at the conference, explained he believed the adverse vote was recorded because the soil conservation and domestic allotment act specifically stipulated that small farmers receive just consideration.

Without appreciable discussion, the conference received a unanimous report recommending this division of subsidy payments between landlords and tenants:

Thirty per cent to the applicant for payment. (This individual will be the man responsible for compliance with conservation conditions and may be either landlord or tenant).

Twenty-five per cent to the landlord.

Ten per cent to the owner of equipment and workstock.

Thirty-five per cent to be prorated as the crop is divided.

Officials pointed out there could be many combinations and many sorts of payment divisions. However, they said tenants should receive a slightly larger share of payments than under the AAA.

Another committee recommended immediate organization of national, regional, State, county and committees to study plans for the 1937 program. The committee urged the AAA to draft a model bill for States to enact for proper participation in the permanent Federal-State cooperative program.

Programs for rice and sugar planters, another committee suggested, should be similar in requirements to those operated under the AAA.

## Middle West Farmers Reach Accord On Plan

CHICAGO, March 7.—(AP)—Farm leaders of the Mid-West went back home tonight to put the new deal's new agricultural program into operation after hearing Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace promise it would be carried out in strict accord with their suggestions.

After two and a half days of wrestling with details, they approved a set of corn belt regulations which Wallace said would be "sufficiently like" his department's final draft that farmers could proceed with their 1936 planting on that basis.

While putting the finishing touches on a 27-page mimeographed report of how they think the new $470,000,000 soil conservation act would best work, the farmers were warned by Wallace that they would return "to the Hell of 1932 in two years" if they "permitted" repeal of the new farm law.

The soil conservation act is "fundamentally" better than the outlawed AAA, and seems impervious to attack from the Supreme Court, the farm Secretary asserted, but he anticipated it might be opposed "in a few years" as an emergency measure.

"Hold on to this act until the tariff is taken away from the 'big boys' and the corporate form of organization is taken away from the 'big boys'," he urged the 300 delegates.

"We believe this is an enduring act—the basis for putting a more constructive foundation under the civilization of a great nation than has ever been done before in history," Wallace added.

"Don't let them take this act, or the money necessary to run it, away from us . . . Fifty years is not long in the life of the ntaion, yet in 50 years, at the rate we have been going (in soil depletion), 50,000,000 of plowed acres would have disappeared."

Tariffs are the real foe of the farmer, Wallace aded, but "because of the psy-

chology of the American people and the people of other nations, we just can't do anything very great" toward reducing them.

The Secretary predicted that the new farm act—directed toward increasing acreage planted in soil conserving crops—would benefit even its critics because "the improvement in income will be distributed generally."

## NO POLITICS INVOLVED

CHICAGO, Harch 7.—(AP)—Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace denied today that payments under the new soil conservation act would be distributed with an eye to the presidential election returns in November.

"There is a lot of strange talk that because this is the year 1936 the Administration will allocate certain amounts to certain sectitons," he told 300 Mid-Western farm leaders.

"In the South, they say the Administration wants to carry the Mid-West. And that more money will go there.

"And I suppose in the Mid-West they say the Administration wants to carry the South, and that more money will go there.

"It's just so much talk."

### DELAY AND FARM TENANCY

In 1880 despite the fact that the South was just emerging from Reconstruction, only a little more than 25 per cent of the total farmers in the United States were tenants. In 1930, although the nation was rounding out its Golden Era decade, 42.8 per cent of the total farmers were working land that belonged to someone else.

Advertiser

The gradual increase in farm tenancy is one of the most depressing factors in the economic development of the United States. There are two fundamental causes for the increase.

3-7-36

First, there was the passing of our frontier. When there was still fertile land available that could be had for homesteading, there was always the opportunity for families to start out anew with little or no capital except a couple of oxen, a wagon, a gun and a skillet. With the turn of the century, homesteading virtually ceased and land began to fall into the hands of a few.

Montgomery, Ala.

Second, our government failed to make any move to offset the effect of the passing frontier unlike many other nations which definitely planned to halt the increase of tenancy and reduce it if possible.

The South, never very rich in capital, has suffered most from farm tenancy. As land has passed from one generation to the next, sons have found it more difficult to make a living on their parcels than had their fathers. It is a rare thing for an average farmer to leave enough money for his descendants to buy their own farms. Because of the lack of adequate educational facilities in many rural sections, particularly before the twenties, many sons of farm-owners were forced into tenancy—farming being the only occupation they knew.

Mortgages, almost as common as the mule on most farms, made it impossible for many to hold their lands through successive depressions when taxes and interest remained at a level while the prices of farm produce decreased. Foreclosures resulted in further increases in tenancy, and prospective farmers had no means to buy lands from banks and corporations.

Among its other disadvantages, tenancy has resulted in the gradual reduction in the value of land. Tenants who remain on land an average of less than four years, and often move on after each crop, have no interest in maintaining the permanent value of land. They are unwilling to bear the expense of fertilizer and planting soil-conserving crops when they never know from one season to the next where they will be.

Senator Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Jones of Texas have introduced a bill which would authorize the government to make loans to tenants, with repayment to be made over a period of years with low interest. So far this session other matters of a more pressing nature have occupied Congress and the status of the proposed legislation remains unchanged from the last session.

Farm tenancy is no more pressing in some respects than it was in 1930. It is a problem, however, that obviously cannot be settled by the mere passing of time, but will become more serious every year if something is not done. Already we have waited too long. Tenancy leads to poverty, ignorance and shiftlessness. Consequently the longer we delay the more difficult will be the task of halting a condition that is dangerous to the welfare of a democracy.

### COTTON AND THE SOUTH'S FUTURE

The promise of the Rust brothers that their cotton picker will not become a cruel Frankenstein is an inspiring example of the acceptance of social responsibility on the part of mechanical genius.

Advertiser

Authorities have predicted that if the new machines were produced in unlimited quantities, the result would be the displacement of at least one-and-a-half-million wage-earners and sharecroppers. But that would be only one of the serious results. By making large-scale production profitable the picker would tend to reduce the price of cotton, thus affecting adversely the entire cotton-farming population.

3-17-36

But with the machine practically perfected, the Rust brothers, who are from Texas and who know what cotton-picking is like from experience, have announced their determination to forego profits for themselves and see that their invention is marketed in such a way as to bring a greater degree of happiness and not misery to workers.

Montgomery, Ala.

One plan that has been suggested and that is receiving consideration from the inventors is to lease machines, instead of selling them outright. Only planters who would agree to obey certain specified conditions would be allowed to lease the machines. The conditions include minimum living wages and maximum hours of work; the abolition of child labor, and recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

As evidence of their own good faith the brothers have limited their own salaries in the Memphis plant of the concern to 10 times that of the corporation's lowest paid employe.

A recent address by Dr. Stewart J. Lloyd, Dean of Chemistry at the University of Alabama, gives added significance to the enlightened view taken by the Rust Brothers. According to Dr. Lloyd Alabama must plan to reduce its cotton production to one-third of the present average within the near future.

The first reason given by Dr. Lloyd is that the center of cotton production is slowly but surely moving west because the country in that section is level and more suitable to mechanized farming than our own. Evidence of this trend is shown by the fact that the yield of cotton per man in western sections is much greater than our own where the land is more or less hilly.

A second reason given by Dr. Lloyd is that foreign countries have begun to compete with us in the production of cotton and that we may expect more and not less rivalry. Among the examples he cited are Russia, which has changed from an importer to an exporter of cotton; the Sudan; Australia; Argentina, and Brazil in which an increasing amount of American capital is being invested in cotton production.

"Another threat, much more formidable," declared Dr. Lloyd, "is the competition from other fibres. We are apt to forget or to ignore the fact that cotton after all is only cellulose, and that the sources of cellulose are almost infinite in number." Among the sources cited were linen, ramie, hemp, jute, wheat straw, corn stalks, bamboo and numerous varieties of trees.

In recent years, it was pointed out, great progress has been made in extracting cellulose from other fibres, particularly wood. Wood cellulose suitable for use in textiles and other products requiring length of fibre may be extracted for as little as two cents a pound in comparison to the 10 cents a pound necessary to insure a living wage for cotton producers, Dr. Lloyd said.

The South has depended upon cotton for subsistence since its early development. That has been the foundation of our whole economic system. But that does not mean that we can expect to go serenely on ad infinitum, or that the world will have pity and continue to buy cotton if other substitutes are found.

In view of such developments as the Rust brothers cotton picker, the inroads upon the cotton market by other nations and the substitution of other raw materials for cotton, it behooves the South to take a far-sighted view of its problems. Otherwise it may expect a rude awakening when the predictions of today become the realities of tomorrow.

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# Harvey Couch Tells Bankers They Overlook Opportunity To Be Community Builders

## Warns Ultra-Conservatism Breeds Radicalism—Blames Financiers for One-Crop System—Urges They Give Service

Harvey C. Couch, Arkansas utilities executive and former RFC director, called upon financial leaders attending the Southern Conference on Banking dinner here last night to lead the cotton-producing south into a prosperous era of diversified industry and agriculture.

Picturing banking as "a service institution," the Arkansas Power & Light Company president expressed the hope the depression would "bring forth a new type of banker, who will arise to the new conditions and new opportunities and who will cast off the bonds of past ultra-conservatism."

The "new type" of banker, Mr. Couch said, "will abstain from the approval of an unsound project where the opportunity for profit for the institution or the banker rather than careful analysis governs and in the spirit of service will conceive new plans and policies with the view to rendering the greatest service to the community and to his institution."

Mr. Couch placed blame for the one-crop system of farming "largely" at the door of southern banks. Noting also that "we let our brightest young men go where their talents had a market," he urged that bankers provide "the outstanding leadership, the encouragement of initiative" needed as "we start on the third cycle of 35 years."

Recalling his own experiences with bankers as a youth, Mr. Couch said:

"Well do I remember when I was building a growing, necessary industry—very weak financially, but fundamentally a sound and money-making business; a telephone system to serve a large growing area in the southwest. I was inexperienced in financial affairs. I visited St. Louis, Memphis and New Orleans, and hardly had a courteous reception. I think it was largely because the bankers did not understand the situation. They preferred loans of the older established and successful institution. Because of their lack of understanding of the needs of the territory and either lack of vision of the opportunity or desire to be of service in helping to build the territory and growing business, I received very scant attention. The result was that my work was made more difficult and these bankers neglected an opportunity not only to be of real service to the people of this territory but to build for themselves an account which in later years became desirable. Just imagine how much real help, how much encouragement it would have meant to me—then about 25 to 27 years of age—if just one of these bankers would have said, 'Son let's see what you have. What do you want with this money and how are you going to pay it back? Let's set up a sound financial plan.' What a help and what a friend he would have been and how anxious I would have been to see that he profited!

3-28-36

### Should Be Alert

"Undoubtedly, similar opportunities are open to you gentlemen. And remember that you in the south and southwest are in that part of the country where many opportunities exist now, and where some very deserving projects are in their incipiency. You should be ready and alert for them.

"Now don't for one moment feel I am suggesting that you lend your depositors money just because of a feeling of public obligation. For the safety or security of the depositors' money is the prime factor in banking.

"Sound credit, of course, is the basis of good banking, but I have a feeling that bankers, as a rule, look too much to the collateral attached or to be attached rather than to the character, the ability, the energy of the applicant. The opportunity of the business, and the possibilities of benefits to the community as a whole from increase of the applicant's production and pay roll. To illustrate: Here is a man who has a small factory. He needs additional capital of $2,500 and offers for security his home, which is worth $5,000. You possibly make the loan, but don't you miss an opportunity of service if you don't go into the matter of what he is going to do with the borrowed money, whether or not his business is properly set up, how he can use this and other money to best advantage and repay you without crippling his business and jeopardizing the sanctity of his home?

"I recall an incident that happened just a year or two ago. A bank had a certain loan, well secured. The borrower really wanted it to ride along, but the banker said it had to be paid. He was cleaning up. He insisted. The borrower sold securities, then worth 50 or 60; worth 90 today, and paid up. The banker bragged that he made him come through. Is this indicative of a service institution? Naturally, the borrower felt oppressed. And, remember gentlemen, that radicalism often develops where too much conservatism rules.

"I really thing that you often hurt a situation by letting an applicant have funds on collateral that is good, but which he can little afford to give up in a crisis. What he needs is financial coaching, the benefit of your education and experience in finance. A service institution.

"Another thing: What interest do you charge a struggling business? The highest rate of any? Isn't that the time he needs the greatest assistance? The banker who can make a safe, constructive loan to a small, though sound, growing business, and who is at the same time sufficiently interested to assist borrowers in making the best use of the money, imparts to his customer the assistance he needs, not merely in dollars but in the encouragement and coaching that keeps his initiative and energy "popping off." What about your leadership? After all, is not knowledge of the territory and its problems, as well as its possibilities, the banker's strength or his weakness? Doubtless, most of you know your territory, or at least feel you do. But do you? Let's consider:

### Back of One Crop System

"The one-crop system. Who is to blame? The bankers largely. Why? Because in your operation the cotton crop is about all you accept as collateral. Here in the south we look to cotton—"King Cotton." What a feeling of plenty exists while the present prices prevail! But aren't we just letting ourselves drift into a satisfied state of complacent contentment, disregardful of the things and opportunities about us? In an area of low cash income, of necessity we must "live at home." Do we encourage this? How many of our relief supplies are produced here? I saw eggs moving from Kansas City to Georgia. I have seen butter in large lots shipped into Arkansas from Wisconsin and so on. But the point is, is there not a field for advice and coaching? How many of you have talked to your county agents to acquaint yourself with their plans and efforts? As a rule they are capable men. It may be they are not as well acquainted with the local conditions as you are. I know they will welcome your suggestions, your help, and your approbation. Have you preached as much as you should:

The garden and the sow,
The smokehouse and the cow,
The 24 hens and rooster,
And you will have more than you uster.

"You know, we produce about 1,000,000 bales of cotton in Arkansas. Thousands of farms produce three to 10 bales—$150 to $500 income. If we could increase the earning power of each individual $50 a year it would mean about twice the value of our entire cotton crop. How may we do this? Industrial development. Reforestation. Originally we had 32,000,000 acres of virgin timber in Arkansas alone. We have cut nearly all of it. How little have we done in reforestation. Nearly half of our pine forests are severely damaged by fire annually. We are beginning to correct this abuse, but we have just begun.

### Mills Use Waste

"We hear so much about waste land, eroded land all along our creeks and rivers, so much land inside the levees, so much cutover land. My, how the bankers and investment houses would talk about this when I was trying to sell Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi to justify the things we wanted to do. How hard we looked for some way to do something about it! Finally, though, I got in touch with a large paper concern that now has six large mills in the south. These cost almost as much as the value of Arkansas' annual cotton crop. How does this help the farmer, the banker, the "candlestick maker?" These mills are using a waste, or useless product. With our gas for fuel, our limestone, salt and sulphur for chemicals, our labor, etc., this is the ideal paper-making section. This business has just begun. The farmer almost any place in Arkansas can get $4 a cord for old field pine wood. Just for a moment picture a small farmer who owns 120 acres with about 30 to 40 acres in cultivation—some in pasture, and some in second growth pine. What is his basic income? Cotton, three to 10 bales. And this is his only collateral with you. Suppose that through you he could be shown what it would be worth to him to grow a timber crop, using the same number of acres, we will say, that he cultivated in other commodities. It will grow an average of 1½ cords a year—40 acres will produce 60 cords which at $4 a cord is $240, or as much or more than his cotton crop. How much thought and assistance do you give to things of this kind beyond your banking hours? I don't mean for you to go out to each farm, but you are an organizer, a leader, so why not bring together the different agencies for doing this? If you, by magic or otherwise, could double the value of the cotton crop you would not wait for this meeting to adjourn before you would be doing it. So why not encourage and help him to grow a crop of timber—something nature will do with just a little help? Where does our newsprint come from? Largely beyond the boundary of the United States. We have large areas along our rivers and thousands of acres of waste land that is ideal for producing timber. Inquire of the average banker and he will say, 'I don't know. It never has been done.' You should initiate instead of imitate.

"We import annually through New Orleans and New York pulp equal to the output of many mills. Nearly 10,000 cars a year come through our southern ports—right through the finest pulpwood areas in the world.

"Many other things can be done. Analyze your community and see what might be done. Is not the unemployed and the needy our liability? Can it not be turned into an asset—available labor, an increased buying power? Let's find something for the unemployed to do. Now with electric power available in every community small factories can be started in nearly every one of them.

"I like black-eyed peas. I finally prevailed on my grocer to get them. He did. Where were they canned? In Maryland. If there is any one thing we can grow in this country at a profit it is black-eyed peas. Where do we get our plow lines, our cotton bagging, nearly everything we consume?

### No One Too Insignificant

"No one is too young or too insignificant for your help. The newspaper boys. Do you talk over their finances with them? Do you give them the extra pennies? Your treatment may affect his entire future. The weak or wayward boy may be saved from wrongdoing by a little attention from you.

"Opportunities are all about us, but we need initiative, courage, assistance and encouragement from those to whom we look for advice and approbation. Have you that spirit? How often do you encourage a fellow to go ahead? Do they seek your advice and financial counsel? Who is to blame if they do not?

"Today the center of population is just north of us in western Indiana. The center of consumption is still nearer—western Kentucky. Memphis is in the heart of the cotton belt and within a radius of 500 miles of this city are 38,000,000 people—nearly one-third of the population of the United States. What an opportunity. Have you neglected it? This is the hardwood center of the country—at one time more standing hardwood timber than any other area. Haven't we furnished the raw product for other centers to prosper in manufacturing? Haven't we let our brightest young men go where their talents had a market, and so on? Who is to blame?

"Why is Atlanta larger than Memphis? Dallas than Fort Worth, Oklahoma City than El Reno, and so on? Can't you trace the reason back to the leadership of some banker?

"Oh, if we had the spirit of our California cousins. Los Angeles is bringing its water supply from the Colorado River—a distance of 241 miles, at a cost of nearly $200,000,000. If you people of Memphis had to go to Springfield, Mo., for your water supply, would you do it? If Los Angeles had 38,000,000 people within 500 miles of its gates, what would they do? What are you going to do?

"With our fertile soil, our fast growing timber supply, our great areas of natural gas and oil, minerals, and other resources, we should be rich. But, oh, how little thought have we given to the manufacture of these raw products. Our cotton has always largely gone out in bales. If in garments we increase its value five to ten times. Our timber has gone out largely in the rough. So, with other products. What are we going to do about it? You say, "this is not our job.' Are you not the lead-

General.

Agriculture - 1936
Condition of

# Harvey Couch Tells Bankers They Overlook Opportunity To Be Community Builders

## Warns Ultra-Conservatism Breeds Radicalism—Blames Financiers for One-Crop System—Urges They Give Service

Harvey C. Couch, Arkansas utilities executive and former RFC director, called upon financial leaders attending the Southern Conference on Banking dinner here last night to lead the cotton-producing south into a prosperous era of diversified industry and agriculture.

Picturing banking as "a service institution," the Arkansas Power & Light Company president expressed the hope the depression would "bring forth a new type of banker, who will arise to the new conditions and new opportunities and who will cast off the bonds of past ultra-conservatism."

The "new type" of banker, Mr. Couch said, "will abstain from the approval of an unsound project where the opportunity for profit for the institution or the banker rather than careful analysis governs and in the spirit of service will conceive new plans and policies with the view to rendering the greatest service to the community and to his institution."

Mr. Couch placed blame for the one-crop system of farming "largely" at the door of southern banks. Noting also that "we let our brightest young men go where their talents had a market," he urged that bankers provide "the outstanding leadership, the encouragement of initiative" needed as "we start on the third cycle of 35 years."

Recalling his own experiences with bankers as a youth, Mr. Couch said:

"Well do I remember when I was building a growing, necessary industry—very weak financially, but fundamentally a sound and money-making business; a telephone system to serve a large growing area in the southwest. I was inexperienced in financial affairs. I visited St. Louis, Memphis and New Orleans, and hardly had a courteous reception. I think it was largely because the bankers did not understand the situation. They preferred loans of the older established and successful institution. Because of their lack of understanding of the needs of the territory and either lack of vision of the opportunity or desire to be of service in helping to build the territory and growing business, I received very scant attention. The result was that my work was made more difficult and these bankers neglected an opportunity not only to be of real service to the people of this territory but to build for themselves an account which in later years became desirable. Just imagine how much real help, how much encouragement it would have meant to me—then about 25 to 27 years of age—if just one of these bankers would have said, 'Son let's see what you have. What do you want with this money and how are you going to pay it back? Let's set up a sound financial plan.' What a help and what a friend he would have been and how anxious I would have been to see that he profited!

### Should Be Alert

"Undoubtedly, similar opportunities are open to you gentlemen. And remember that you in the south and southwest are in that part of the country where many opportunities exist now, and where some very deserving projects are in their incipiency. You should be ready and alert for them.

"Now don't for one moment feel I am suggesting that you lend your depositors money just because of a feeling of public obligation. For the safety or security of the depositors' money is the prime factor in banking.

"Sound credit, of course, is the basis of good banking, but I have a feeling that bankers, as a rule, look too much to the collateral attached or to be attached rather than to the character, the ability, the energy of the applicant. The opportunity of the business, and the possibilities of benefits to the community as a whole from increase of the applicant's production and pay roll. To illustrate: Here is a man who has a small factory. He needs additional capital of $2,500 and offers for security his home, which is worth $5,000. You possibly make the loan, but don't you miss an opportunity of service if you don't go into the matter of what he is going to do with the borrowed money, whether or not his business is properly set up, how he can use this and other money to best advantage and repay you without crippling his business and jeopardizing the sanctity of his home?

"I recall an incident that happened just a year or two ago. A bank had a certain loan, well secured. The borrower really wanted it to ride along, but the banker said it had to be paid. He was cleaning up. He insisted. The borrower sold securities, then worth 50 or 60; worth 90 today, and paid up. The banker bragged that he made him come through. Is this indicative of a service institution? Naturally, the borrower felt oppressed. And, remember gentlemen, that radicalism often develops where too much conservatism rules.

"I really thing that you often hurt a situation by letting an applicant have funds on collateral that is good, but which he can little afford to give up in a crisis. What he needs is financial coaching, the benefit of your education and experience in finance. A service institution.

"Another thing: What interest do you charge a struggling business? The highest rate of any? Isn't that the time he needs the greatest assistance? The banker who can make a safe, constructive loan to a small, though sound, growing business, and who is at the same time sufficiently interested to assist borrowers in making the best use of the money, imparts to his customer the assistance he needs, not merely in dollars but in the encouragement and coaching that keeps his initiative and energy "popping off." What about your leadership? After all, is not knowledge of the territory and its problems, as well as its possibilities, the banker's strength or his weakness? Doubtless, most of you know your territory, or at least feel you do. But do you? Let's consider:

### Back of One Crop System

"The one-crop system. Who is to blame? The bankers largely. Why? Because in your operation the cotton crop is about all you accept as collateral. Here in the south we look to cotton—"King Cotton." What a feeling of plenty exists while the present prices prevail! But aren't we just letting ourselves drift into a satisfied state of complacent contentment, disregardful of the things and opportunities about us? In an area of low cash income, of necessity we must "live at home." Do we encourage this? How many of our relief supplies are produced here? I saw eggs moving from Kansas City to Georgia. I have seen butter in large lots shipped into Arkansas from Wisconsin and so on. But the point is, is there not a field for advice and coaching? How many of you have talked to your county agents to acquaint yourself with their plans and efforts? As a rule they are capable men. It may be they are not as well acquainted with the local conditions as you are. I know they will welcome your suggestions, your help, and your approbation. Have you preached as much as you should:

The garden and the sow,
The smokehouse and the cow,
The 24 hens and rooster,
And you will have more than you uster.

"You know, we produce about 1,000,000 bales of cotton in Arkansas. Thousands of farms produce three to 10 bales—$150 to $500 income. If we could increase the earning power of each individual $50 a year it would mean about twice the value of our entire cotton crop. How may we do this? Industrial development. Reforestation. Originally we had 32,000,000 acres of virgin timber in Arkansas alone. We have cut nearly all of it. How little have we done in reforestation. Nearly half of our pine forests are severely damaged by fire annually. We are beginning to correct this abuse, but we have just begun.

### Mills Use Waste

"We hear so much about waste land, eroded land all along our creeks and rivers, so much land inside the levees, so much cutover land. My, how the bankers and investment houses would talk about this when I was trying to sell Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi to justify the things we wanted to do. How hard we looked for some way to do something about it! Finally, though, I got in touch with a large paper concern that now has six large mills in the south. These cost almost as much as the value of Arkansas' annual cotton crop. How does this help the farmer, the banker, the "candlestick maker?" These mills are using a waste, or useless product. With our gas for fuel, our limestone, salt and sulphur for chemicals, our labor, etc., this is the ideal paper-making section. This business has just begun. The farmer almost any place in Arkansas can get $4 a cord for old field pine wood. Just for a moment picture a small farmer who owns 120 acres with about 30 to 40 acres in cultivation—some in pasture, and some in second growth pine. What is his basic income? Cotton, three to 10 bales. And this is his only collateral with you. Suppose that through you he could be shown what it would be worth to him to grow a timber crop, using the same number of acres, we will say, that he cultivated in other commodities. It will grow an average of 1½ cords a year—40 acres will produce 60 cords which at $4 a cord is $240, or as much or more than his cotton crop. How much thought and assistance do you give to things of this kind beyond your banking hours? I don't mean for you to go out to each farm, but you are an organizer, a leader, so why not bring together the different agencies for doing this? If you, by magic or otherwise, could double the value of the cotton crop you would not wait for this meeting to adjourn before you would be doing it. So why not encourage and help him to grow a crop of timber—something nature will do with just a little help? Where does our newsprint come from? Largely beyond the boundary of the United States. We have large areas along our rivers and thousands of acres of waste land that is ideal for producing timber. Inquire of the average banker and he will say, 'I don't know. It never has been done.' You should initiate instead of imitate.

"We import annually through New Orleans and New York pulp equal to the output of many mills. Nearly 10,000 cars a year come through our southern ports—right through the finest pulpwood areas in the world.

"Many other things can be done. Analyze your community and see what might be done. Is not the unemployed and the needy our liability? Can it not be turned into an asset—available labor, an increased buying power? Let's find something for the unemployed to do. Now with electric power available in every community small factories can be started in nearly every one of them.

"I like black-eyed peas. I finally prevailed on my grocer to get them. He did. Where were they canned? In Maryland. If there is any one thing we can grow in this country at a profit it is black-eyed peas. Where do we get our plow lines, our cotton bagging, nearly everything we consume?

### No One Too Insignificant

"No one is too young or too insignificant for your help. The newsboys. Do you talk over their finances with them? Do you give them the extra pennies? Your treatment may affect his entire future. The weak or wayward boy may be saved from wrongdoing by a little attention from you.

"Opportunities are all about us, but we need initiative, courage, assistance and encouragement from those to whom we look for advice and approbation. Have you that spirit? How often do you encourage a fellow to go ahead? Do they seek your advice and financial counsel? Who is to blame if they do not?

"Today the center of population is just north of us in western Indiana. The center of consumption is still nearer—western Kentucky. Memphis is in the heart of the cotton belt and within a radius of 500 miles of this city are 38,000,000 people—nearly one-third of the population of the United States. What an opportunity. Have you neglected it? This is the hardwood center of the country—at one time more standing hardwood timber than any other area. Haven't we furnished the raw product for other centers to prosper in manufacturing? Haven't we let our brightest young men go where their talents had a market, and so on? Who is to blame?

"Why is Atlanta larger than Memphis? Dallas than Fort Worth, Oklahoma City than El Reno, and so on? Can't you trace the reason back to the leadership of some banker?

"Oh, if we had the spirit of our California cousins. Los Angeles is bringing its water supply from the Colorado River—a distance of 241 miles, at a cost of nearly $200,000,000. If you people of Memphis had to go to Springfield, Mo., for your water supply, would you do it? If Los Angeles had 38,000,000 people within 500 miles of its gates, what would they do? What are you going to do?

"With our fertile soil, our fast growing timber supply, our great areas of natural gas and oil, minerals, and other resources, we should be rich. But, oh, how little thought have we given to the manufacture of these raw products. Our cotton has always largely gone out in bales. If in garments we increase its value five to ten times. Our timber has gone out largely in the rough. So, with other products. What are we going to do about it? You say, "this is not our job.' Are you not the lead-

ers the builders? Is it not your job to help initiate and finance it? Are you a 'Service Institution?'

"We have a courageous people. Look what Lee Wilson did for eastern Arkansas. See what Joe Beck is doing today. Someone provided credit in some stage of their developments. And, there are thousands of others who have the courage, the energy and determination. I understand here in Memphis that a wonderful success was made in the furniture business by a Mr. Morrow. Some little bank provided his first credit. Was it based on his balance sheet? You know it was not. It was very likely because that banker knew his man; knew the fundamentals of the business and the opportunities. They may not all have the resourcefulness of Lee Wilson, Joe Beck and Mr. Morrow, and they may never be as successful, but they have character, the spirit of independence and are willing to work. What they need is encouragement, counsel, perhaps help from men like you. Leadership. The pride of ownership in the heart of every good American will build homes, farms and factories. We should energize our communities rather than socialize them.

**Always Opportunities**

"In virtually every community there are opportunities for one or more industries and men who could successfully operate them. Perhaps, some already exist, operated by men of ability and integrity, competent as to production but perhaps inexperienced in financing and marketing. Consider the service you could render your community by finding the opportunities and the men to develop them, and bring the two together. Or by assisting the established small business to grow bigger. Or by finding the right man to take over and run the sick business or factory in your town. Isn't it in a way your duty to the community that supports you and your institution? Isn't this worthwhile?

"This great valley is richer than the Nile. It is the center of population and the artery of commerce and transportation and has a climate in which most any plant life can thrive. Reforest our eroded lands with the pine, encourage large families among our native-born people. This will help any community. After all a pure American-bred population with a spirit of the pioneers—independent, self-reliant, courageous is our greatest community and national asset.

"In 1932 I was made a member of the RFC board. We were in a terrible state of affairs. Conditions in some ways even worse than in the Mississippi Valley during the flood of 1927. Many were the calls and heavy the responsibilities. Big banks and little banks came to us. We had to believe in the country to meet the needs.

I never knew a board of men or an organization that worked harder or longer hours. But it was a great satisfaction for us to be able to help a fellow or a crowd of men who were putting up a good fight. And the fine men I met! These acquaintance and friendships comprise my best pay.

"After nearly three years of this work, I came back home to this great southwest of ours with the conviction that the south and the southwest had wonderful resources and opportunities. It is the best area of the United States. It is near the markets, near the center of consumption, with excellent people eager and willing to work; good schools and our factories yet to be built, our income yet too low and to be increased. So, now we start on the third cycle of 35 years. Are you bankers going to provide the outstanding leadership, the encouragement of initiative? Are you going to assist in providing sound and proper financial structures for the particular businesses involved, greater use of waste and inactive natural resources, schools better adapted to the needs of our respective communities—in short, the outstanding leadership needed?

"What is a community, a town or city? Simply a place where people live. Why do they grow and thrive? Largely because there was or is one real leadership; some one who was "up and doing." Usually it was or is the leader of the banking fraternity. Take an inventory of yourself, of your own institution. Do you measure up in your own mind to the needs of the situations?

"You, I am afraid, think too much of liquidity. Depend too much on the daily market as a guide in making loans. Suddenly, you have become too conservative.

"Are you going to assume that leadership that is becoming to you and to your institution? To help find something for every one to do, and instill the principle that every one must be willing to do that something that he can do? Work for the upbuilding of your community, and not too much for yourself. The time is at hand for a forward march. Are you ready? Your statements show that you are prepared? Are you going to arise to the opportunity. I believe that you will. Proceed!"

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**Anniston, Ala. Star**

April 16, 1936

## Nixon's Suggestion

The Chattanooga News calls attention to some thoughts advanced by Dr. H. C. Nixon, native of Calhoun County, on the problems of agriculture in the South. Dr. Nixon, who is now a member of the faculty of Tulane University, considers the need for providing some form of social security for the farmers, his views being presented in a booklet, "Social Security for Southern Farmers" published by the Southern Policy Committee.

According to Dr. Nixon, eight important factors must be taken into account in devising a plan to improve the condition of the Southern farmer permanently. These are listed as follows:

1. The rural population of the region; its high birth rate; its inadequate housing; its deficient diet, and its intensive poverty.

2. The large proportion of children on the Southern countryside.

3. The precarious comparative status of the rural Negro who plays an important but declining part in Southern farming.

4. The risks, insecurity and instability of the prevailing system of farm tenancy with its inevitable emphasis on the one-crop system.

5. The cotton farmer's dilemma of having to sell in a world economy and buy in a national economy, with a tariff-price differential against him.

6. The plight of Southeastern hill farmers because of competition from the mechanized farming of the Southwest and the lowlands.

7. The tendency of Southern farm lands to lose productivity rapidly in the absence of positive measures of conservation.

8. The high percentage of illiteracy in the rural South.

Commenting on these suggestions, The Chattanooga paper says that they seem to get at the heart of the problem. "It seems to us," The News says, "that this is a proper listing of the important elements to be considered in the Southern agricultural problem. As Dr. Nixon says, 'if the social security effort is to be more than a sop or a gesture toward safeguarding standards of health and living for the dependent children in Southern agriculture, that agriculture must provide a balanced abundance.'

"And when one thinks of the more abundant economy, one recognizes that it would do two things for the South: First, it would reduce rural poverty and the need for state aid. Again, it would directly or indirectly increase the flow of tax funds to the treasury of the states. Fiscal gymnastics cannot effect these needed ends. To procure genuine security, the rural South 'must produce more get more and consume more.'"

Of the three needs mentioned by The News that of production should give the least trouble at the present time, for farmers of the South have been able to produce more in recent years than the market would absorb. How to give them better prices for their products and more of the things not produced on the farms is a problem that presents greater difficulties.

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**ATLANTA, GA.**

**CONSTITUTION**

MAY 22 1936

### THE TENANT PROBLEM

Addressing the Southern Newspaper Publishers' Association at its recent meeting in Asheville, Dr. W. W Alexander, assistant administrator of the Federal Resettlement Administration, declared that the south's tenant problem makes it a "seedbed for social unrest," and that without some stabilizing change may lead to violence in the future. Emphasizing this point, Dr. Alexander said:

> This tenant class—white and black—are the kind of people to whom extreme radicals appeal. Huey Long is dead, but conditions that produced him remain. His strength was in appeal to this group and on their backs he rode to power. There will be other Huey Longs tomorrow and in the years to come. . . .

The tenant-cropper problem has been growing with the years; society has observed this growth, and from time to time has discussed it, but with no resulting action. The present administration has done more than discuss it; action to better the condition of tenants and croppers is a part of the New Deal, and some progress has been made, despite strenuous opposition.

Wholesale rehabilitation of the nation's tenants and croppers is an impossibility, not only on account of the money outlay that would be involved, but because an unknown number must be trained in the matter of thrift and dependability to avoid waste of time and money on the part of the government.

The government's resettlement program calls for aiding those whose character and ability indicate that, having been helped a certain distance on the road to independence, they will be able to travel alone. The resettlement program was put into operation as an experiment, with the purpose of proceeding slowly and by experience learning the best methods to pursue.

There is a possibility that the future will see the enactment of some such law as the Bankhead measure, with which the Resettlement Administration may make more rapid progress.

Hamstringing the movement by depriving it of needed funds would act to terminate the only real move that has ever been made to better the condition of the tenants and croppers.

General.

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## The Great Eviction Myth

In "Cotton and the AAA," by Henry I. Richards, published by the nonpartisan fact-finding Brookings Institution, we have at last an authoritative refutation of the propaganda against southern planters which was dished up before the AAA was outlawed by the Supreme Court and which is still, by inference, being carried on by presidential candidates Alf Landon and Norman Thomas, twin stooges for the "economic royalists" in this political sketch. Little Boy Blue Landon keeps tooting his horn over the prairies, promising the farmers more treasury checks. But he says there'll be no checks for big planters.

The ink was hardly dry on the Agricultural Adjustment Act before the south was invaded by muckrakers of two varieties, Reds and Little Brothers of the Rich. They came to build up a story that the curtailment of the cotton crop naturally suggested to minds unfamiliar with southern institutions and ways of life. Cradled in urban industrialism where the accepted practice of the employer is to fire his help the moment it becomes a liability, it was impossible either for the Big Business Roosevelt hater or for the Red Roosevelt hater to conceive that crop curtailment could result in anything but a wholesale eviction of sharecroppers, who would be cast on relief agencies supported by federal taxation.

There was every inducement to both groups to make this story stick, whether true or false. Now, as in the first half of the nineteenth century, when the south was hated by such social excrescences as William Lloyd Garrison and by all the defectives and degenerates spewed across the Atlantic after the debacle of the Communist outbreaks of 1848, the vital, normal people of the south excite the instinctive hatred of persons who are acutely conscious of their own decadence. And the financier or industrialist with an uneasy conscience due to his own failure to meet his social obligations to labor is only too eager to distract attention from his own unemployed and destitute to the labor problems of another part of the country.

So we had Norman Thomas exclaiming in March, 1934: "Under the operations of AAA hundreds of thousands of them (sharecroppers) are either being driven out on the roads without hope of absorption in industry or exist without land to cultivate by grace of the landlord in shacks scarcely fit for pigs." Only in the violence of the language did this bunk differ from the Pecksniffian pity and crocodile tears of the Tories who bemoaned the poor sharecropper's fate down south while piously chiseling on NRA at home.

Now we have reached the stage of scientific examination of the facts. Mr. Richards' researches find that the great AAA evictions were a myth. It is impossible to give a detailed review here of his findings, but the book should be widely read throughout the cotton states.

Study and elaborate checking of the evidence by Mr. Richards led him to the conclusion that "there was no considerable displacement of tenants or reduction of their status to that of laborers in the cotton belt," and that "any surplus of farm labor created by the cotton program did not prevent farm wages from rising more in the south than in other parts of the United States."

The southern planter under AAA, as before and since AAA, not only lays out more money in advance for his labor than almost any other employer, but labor receives a greater share of the joint product of boss and man than in the great majority of either farm or industrial enterprises. This has always been true, even under slavery. As far back as the eighteen fifties British economic writers pointed out that hardly any millionaires were made in slave agriculture, because the first charge on the planter was food and clothes for his people. Carrol D. Wright, first labor commissioner of the United States, heading the bureau that afterward became the Department of Labor, pointed out 50 years ago that, even under slavery, plantation labor got a higher "cut" of the product than wage labor.

It is too much to expect facts ever to catch up with fakes. They didn't before 1861 and they never have since 1934. But the south has marched steadily ahead despite the vaporings of alien muckrakers. It will continue to progress and prosper as long as it preserves unity in the consideration and promotion of its own interests. The planter and tenant have mutual interests and common enemies. The prosperity of the planter is the only assurance of prosperity to the tenant. The tenant's share of the joint product of planter and tenant, already larger proportionally than the share of most wage labor, will gain as the prosperity of southern agriculture increases, and not otherwise.

Commercial Appeal
9-30-36
Memphis, Tenn.

### THE SOY BEAN

That the soy bean is one of the most valuable of our farm products is being increasingly realized by producers, manufacturing industries and the ultimate consumer, who is being served this truly marvelous product in some form, varying from an article of food to an ingredient in paint for his house, or a part for his automobile.

The soy bean comes to us from China, where it has been grown for several hundred years and where it long has been a principal source of protein in the Chinese diet. They make a soy bean milk which looks and tastes very much like cow's milk, and the curd looks and tastes like cream cheese. The beans themselves are boiled for the table, including the succulent sprouts, and the parched beans are roasted like peanuts. They contain double the amount of protein and calories present in beefsteak, one pound of soy beans being equivalent in fat and protein to two pounds of beef.

The soy bean came to the United States something over half a century ago, but it is only within the past few years that its valuable properties have begun to be realized. For many years it was regarded as just another imported farm crop, and few farmers cared to experiment with it. But agricultural scientists began to subject the alien to experiments and publish pamphlets explaining their findings, and gradually progressive farmers began to profit by the revelations of the "book farmers."

The digestible part of the common bean consists of approximately one-fourth protein, three-fourths starch, and no oil. The soy bean consists of two-thirds protein, one-third oil, and no starch. That makes it a splendid article of diet for persons who should not eat starchy foods, and so in time manufacturers were producing soy bean flour for bread, macaroni, spaghetti and noodles.

A manufacturer has started making motor car accessories from the solid part of soy beans, such as dashboard panels, gearshift knobs and distributor cases, while other manufacturers are using soy bean plastics in many other forms.

The soy bean oil is also valuable and is being used more and still more, mixed with tung oil and linseed oil in paints and varnishes.

After the oil is extracted the cake provides a better stock feed than cottonseed, or it may be used as fertilizer. The soy bean roots have a peculiar affinity for oxygen, so it is recommended and used extensively as a winter cover crop to be plowed under as green manure to improve the fertility of land. The vines make good hay, so, all in all, it is one of the best crops a farmer may produce.

In China there are several hundred varieties of soy beans, many of which have been tested out in the United States. At present seedsmen list only 50 varieties, but there appears to be a variety for every section of the country. Last year's crop was the largest ever harvested in the United States, being over 30,000,000 bushels, and most of it was produced in the northern states, Illinois and Iowa being the leaders.

There are varieties of soy beans suitable for Georgia and other sections of the southeast, and the crop thrives in most parts of Dixie. The new uses that are being constantly developed would appear to insure that it may be many years in the future before the supply will equal the demand, and so as Georgia farmers reduce their cotton acreages and increase diversification of their crops, it would be wise to include soy beans in the list of valuable additions.

Constitution
Nov. 4, '36
Atlanta, Ga.

## Albion Holsey Gives His Impression Of Southern Farm Tenant System

### One White Man Carried Off Receipts for Forty Bales of Cotton Over A Year Ago; Has Not Settled Yet

By ALBON L. HOLSEY

(Editor's Note: Mr. Holsey, who is doing field work for the Educational Department of the Soil Conservation Program under the AAA, has just completed a tour of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. The Associated Negro Press has asked him to give some of his impressions of the Southwest. This is another of the series.)

Those of us who serve at Tuskegee Institute are privileged to keep quite well informed on the general progress of the Negro of the rural sections. I was, therefore, very happy when the opportunity came to me to attend some of the soil conservation meetings which had been arranged by AAA officials for Negro farmers of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. On this, my first trip through the plantation areas of these Southwestern states, I received many impressions of the landlord-tenant

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2-26 Washington

relationship which I can never forget.

Among these impressions there was nothing more confusing and baffling than the many cotrasts which one observes. While I would not presume to present these contrasts and impressions as the final and true picture of the system, they do represent certain phases which, at the moment, claim much serious thought among our people.

At one place you hear a smiling and self-confident Negro farm owner say that under the AAA he has grown and sold cotton at a profit, paid his mortgage, remodeled his home and banked some money. At another place a Negro tenant tells how he has worked, grown cotton, turned it over to the landowner, and never received a settlement.

On a hundred-mile auto trip through Arkansas we saw a farm which is operated by a Negro renter. In 1935, with his own mules, tools and implements, and with seed and labor supplied by himself, he raised forty bales of cotton. The landowner took the cotton receipts to Memphis or New Orleans with the promise to sell the cotton and return to make a settlement. More than a year has elapsed since then, and the Negro renter is still awaiting settlement. Now, 20 miles away we passed another plantation where the humanitarian landowner keeps the Negro tenant homes whitewashed and screened, maintains a model school and church for them and makes prompt and honest settlement each year.

**System Breeds Evils**

Among all the contrasting impressions, one inexorable conclusion does stand out, and that is that the cotton growing system, in its worst features, devastates men's souls. Created as it is upon the exploitation of cheap, ignorant labor, it has bred many evils, the presence of which both the landowner and tenant frankly admit.

The natural disinteration of the system through its own economic faults has been hastened by certain features of the AAA and other government measures. Among other things, the AAA attempted to establish an accurate method of accounting for the cotton produced and arranged for tenants and sharecroppers to receive certain payments direct from the government.

The government's program is by no means perfect, due to the fact that some of its details must, of necessity, be very largely entrusted to local individuals and groups. However, as a matter of precaution, the government has let it be known that appeals may be made and thus wrongs and injustices corrected. It is a matter of record in the office of the Southern region of the AAA that hundreds of letters from Negroes protesting against certain irregularities have been sifted to the bottom and satisfactory adjustments made. The case of the Negro farmer in Mississippi who saved his farm from foreclosure by appealing to President Roosevelt over the long-distance telephone is still fresh in our minds.

In the disintegeration of the system, it was inevitable that restlessness and antagonisms should arise and that changes of any sort would be met with stubborn resistance from most of the landowners. For example, down in Eastern Arkansas, where the union situation is so acute, a local colored man told me:

**A "Little Better" Treatment**

"The greatest benefit which has come out of this agitation has been the publicity. The owners don't like that, and many of them, through fear of it, are treating their tenants a little better."

Which reminds me of the comment of a Washington official who said:

"We must educate the Negro farm workers of the South concerning the full details of the government's agricultural program. Such education will protect them and will also protect the unscrupulous landlord from himself. When the farm worker knows his right under our program and the landlord knows that he knows them he will be less likely to try to take advantage."

The effect of all these forces converging upon the pernicious elements of the cotton system are definitely apparent. Ask the Negroes themselves. One tenant told me: "Yes, things are a little better since the government took charge."

Further light on the changing status of the system may be gleaned from a statement made to me by a prominent and responsible Negro professional man of Arkansas. He said that while he was in an office a few days ago he overheard a white landowner say:

"If this man Roosevelt stays in office, he will break up our plantations and change onur system of handlin' n——s."

The sentiments of that man represent the defense of a system which, though born out of the urgent necessities following the Civil War and when the promise of "forty acres and a mule" did not materialize, has since become a menace to Southern prosperity.

**All Have Been Helped**

The triple A and soil conservation programs have not solved these problems, but the voluntary testimony of Negro farmers is convincing evidence that the majority of cotton growers — white and Negro, landowners and tenants—have been helped, and the wa is open for further legislation to add other improvements.

The tenant system is deep-rooted. It cannot be successfully supplanted until a workable system is installed in its place. Students of the problem are of one mind that farm ownership with government aid and co-operation offers a practical solution of the problem. Both Secretary of Agriculture Wallace and Director C. A. Cobb, of the Southern region of the AAA, are committed to a program of encouragement of small farm ownership as rapidly as tenants display ability to successfully manage their affairs.

Paradoxically, the very conditions upon which the tenant system prospered served at the same time to destroy initiative and independent thinking among the tenants. The changes, though definitely impending, may be slower, therefore, than many of us desire. In the language of Booker T. Washington, progress toward a sound agricultural program for the South must be measured "not by the heights which have been reached, but by the depths from which it has come."

# TELLS OF BENEFITS DERIVED IN SOUTH

WASHINGTON, Nov. 3.—(ANP)—Attacking what he branded "a partisan political attempt to persuade Northern Negroes that the AAA program has injured colored farmers in the South," Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace Monday set forth what he described as benefits derived from the New Deal's rural program.

"These programs are too important from the standpoint of all farmers to let such charges as these go unchallenged," asserted Secretary Wallace. "In the first place, the AAA, as most Negroes know, did not create the tenant and sharecropper systems of the South. They have been in existence since the Civil War and are the product of general economic conditions."

The cabinet member said the first AAA measure, the cotton plow-up, was launched during the emergency of 1933 and admitted this and other programs drafted immediately afterward contained "many imperfections." But since then many changes have been made to make the program more effective and fairer to all farmers. He stated that under the 1936 program, all checks due tenants will go directly to the tenants in order to prevent "unscrupulous landlords from withholding payments due sharecroppers." In addition, the sharecropper's portions of the payments have been increased, Mr. Wallace added.

"I am certain the programs have helped the majority of Southern farmers, whether white or colored, owner or tenant," the Secretary declared. "The income from cotton has more than doubled since 1932. Anyone familiar with the South knows that one of the reasons why tenancy has continued and spread has been the meager return from the principal cash crop.

"The land taken out of cotton by the administration's program has been made available for the growing of food and feed. This has helped raise the living standard of all farmers.

"The program has resulted in a sharp increase in the number of Negro extension workers. In turn, this has resulted in educational work among thousands of Negro farmers.

"I know of no responsible Negro who has made a careful study of the operation of agricultural programs in the South who will not agree that the Negro farmer is far better off under the program than in the years immediately preceding their inauguration.

"Despite improvement, we have only made a beginning. The administration has endorsed a plan for the reduction of tenancy through federal financing of land purchases. The Soil Conservation Program will be continued by this administration.

"And in these programs, or in any national program for agriculture, there is no room for racial prejudice or discrimination."

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## Mississippi Youth Accused as Drunken Motorist

## TWO WOMEN ACQUITTED

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Having relieved the farmer of some of the hazards and uncertainties with which he has been traditionally afflicted, it might be contended that he should work out his future by application of the usual rule of rugged individuality. But the administration indicates that it will not be content to put the farmer on his feet and leave him there before he is able to walk.

The idea, not yet fully crystallized, is to make it easy to take the first step toward farm ownership. With long term loans and low interest rates, the intelligent and enterprising non-landowning farmer will have no one to blame but himself if he fails to realize his ambition.

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Otherwise it would be a waste of time and money. No matter to what extent the government might contribute financially toward a changed status, it is doubtful if any considerable number would be permanently helped unless the tenant possesses essentials to make use of the assistance.

It is not suggested that the administration's concern for the underprivileged is tinctured with political consideration, but there is no discounting the fact that it has profited tremendously from that direction. Precautions have been taken to prevent discrimination between white and colored in the administration of relief. Slow to forget a favor and quick to forget injustice, the negro, particularly, is sensitive to the consideration he has received.

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From a vote-getting standpoint, the Democratic convention speech generally considered most effective was made by Representative Mitchell, colored, from Chicago, when he effectively dramatized the historic telephone conversation between Sylvester, the Columbus, Miss., negro, and the president, which resulted in saving Sylvester's farm from foreclosure.

Negroes everywhere appreciated the president's sympathetic action as a racial favor and many of them voted their appreciation. Regardless of the fact that the administration approaches the tenant problem with an eye single to its economic necessity, the beneficiaries will read into that action political implications of far-reaching consequence.

## THE FUTURE OF COTTON

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David L. Cohn, writing in The Arkansas Democrat, reviews the decline in the consumption of American cotton.

"Twenty-five years ago," he says, "Americans consumed about 27 pounds of cotton per capita every year. Now they consume about 20 pounds. Why? Because of the use of substitutes—rayon, paper, hemp." He continues:

> Let's look abroad. We used to dominate the cotton markets of the world. We do so no longer. Some 52 other countries now grow cotton. Great and powerful competitors have recently arisen in China, Brazil, Argentina and Russia.
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> The United States is actually producing less cotton now than it did 25 years ago. In the pre-war period 1909-13, we grew an average crop of 13,000,000 bales. This year, the crop will be under 12,000,000 bales. And yet the population of the United States during this period has increased by 40,000,000 and the population of the world by several hundred millions. There are more cotton consumers than ever. And more cotton is being consumed by the world than ever. But it is not American cotton that is being consumed. Why?
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> Primarily because of our policy of high tariffs. We used to sell cotton in great volume to England, Germany, Japan and Italy, in lesser volume to Poland, Spain, China and Czechoslovakia. Once these countries were forced to buy a large part of their requirements from us because cotton was not largely grown elsewhere. Now it can be had from other countries. And cotton-buying countries tend to get their supplies from cotton-growing countries that will take their manufactured goods in exchange.
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Mr. Cohn then raises the question of whether it is desirable for the South to turn to the production of cattle, sheep, hogs and small grain. But he believes it would be ruinous for both the South and the Mid-West if the former turned to the production of foodstuff. He says:

". . . The Middle West is already engaged in doing this job. The Middle West cannot do anything else. The South can grow Middle Western products, but the Middle West cannot grow cotton. If the South converts millions of former cotton acres into the growing of cattle and the producing of dairy products, what will happen?

"First of all, it will supply these things to its own population instead of buying them as it does now from the Middle West. That means the immediate loss of a market of 30,000,000 people. The Middle West is none too prosperous now, and the loss of this great market would deal it a severe blow.

"But the process would not stop there. Once the South had supplied its own needs, it would begin to export to other parts of the country and abroad in competition with the Middle West. Where would the advantage lie in this struggle?

"The vital point is that, however the competition turned out, it would be ruinous to the entire United States. If the millions of Middle Western acres and the millions of former cotton acres were both turned to producing the same things, the economy of both sections would collapse. And in turn, the economy of the United States would collapse with the fall of its greatest agricultural sections.

"The problem of cotton is, therefore not merely a Southern but a national problem."

Obviously the South's agricultural economy is a national and not a regional problem. But it might be recalled that for the last century and particularly for the last 30 years the South has been trying to get that fact across to the nation without success. It has languished under protective tariff policies, suffering all the penalties and receiving few of the benefits.

Mr. Cohn's prophecy is a little far-fetched. His contention that the turning of the South to the production of foodstuffs would mean the loss of a market of 30,000,000 people is exaggerated. The South already produces a portion of the food it consumes—approximately one-half in fact.

The South can make drastic increases in the production of foodstuffs for its own consumption without reducing its consumption of importations from the Mid-West. And that is not all. The South can increase its consumption of Eastern industrial products, making it possible for the East to buy more from the Mid-West. The South will not eliminate the production of cotton. It will gradually decrease its production, however. Adjustments will be made gradually and while the mid-West may suffer to a certain extent, no calamity is impending.

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Charleston, S. C. News & Courier
November 21, 1936

## About "Farm Tenancy"

One hears and reads much of the "problem of farm tenancy" that is spoken or written in ignorance.

About a dozen years ago A. G. Smith, of Columbia, S. C., an experienced farmer as well as trained student of agriculture, wrote articles in the Columbia State seriously contending that to lease farm lands was more economical than to own them, at least in some circumstances and regions.

We have heard of cases, a few, of planters who suffered from the "depression," which began in South Carolina in the autumn of 1920, lost their broad acres, then rented them from the new owners, usually land banks, without shrinkage of income, possibly with increase of it. The new owners paid the taxes.

The factor of state, county, and school property taxes lies close to the land tenure problem in this state. In these taxes and the assessments upon which they are based is no uniformity and no attempt to arrive at it. If the theory is that all real estate be assessed at 20 per cent, one discovers that it is 10 per cent in one county, 20 in another and 50, even 100, in another. Within the same county rates of assessment often widely differ.

The simple explanation of this hodgepodge is that some sections and districts are in sounder fiscal condition than others, have no onerous debt, and naturally their local authorities press down assessments to the lowest possible point. Thus one county in proportion to its property values may and actually does sometimes pay state taxes at a rate 25 or 35 per cent of the rate of another county. In many school districts high assessments are necessary to pay interest on bonds for better schoolhouses than the people could afford.

The constitution adopted in 1895 under Governor Tillman's domination abolished the assessments by minor political divisions formerly permitted by law.

In South Carolina a vigorous, thrifty man can be a landowner if he wishes. The landholding families of today are with exceptions not those of thirty or forty years ago. Some tens of thousands of negroes have acquired lands in South Carolina in the last fifty years—and thousands have lost their acquisitions.

Millions of acres (not the choice lands) are purchasable at five or ten dollars an acre. With ordinarily intelligent treatment they can be "brought up." Good farms that were poor thirty years or fifteen ago are not uncommon.

Government cannot help many landless persons to buy farms and to hold them unless it shall include in its laws provisions against their alienation by mortgage or sale. That would be to create a class of vassals attached to the soil. It may be that the notion is included in the Bankhead farm tenancy bill. The motion of making men vassals, or serfs, of government is not as repugnant to the Americans as once it was.

Anyway, people in South Carolina who want to be landowners can get the land with less sacrifice and exertion now than at any time in the state's history—and the unwillingness to make sacrifice for that or any other object is probably greater than ever it was before.

# Raper Says Farm Tenant System Is Menace to Entire Social Order

### *Constructive Program for Extension of Land Ownership in Rural Population Is Great Need of Today, Farm Authority Tells Social Scientists.*

Intelligent urban dwellers can no longer ignore living conditions among rural dwellers, except at great cost to themselves, Arthur Raper, professor of sociology at Agnes Scott College and authority on southern farm problems, told members of the Georgia Academy of Social Science last night.

Tracing the collapse of the plantation system and pointing the trail for the future, Raper cautioned against a "do nothing" attitude in the face of a crisis in "this blighted kingdom."

After tracing the history of the rural sections from the days of the War Between the States and citing causes resulting in present conditions: (1) necessity for a cash crop to repay imperative borrowings following the war; (2) determination of plantation owners to keep the negro dependent; (3) necessity of assumption of all financial risk by the landowner and consequent determination to keep the tenant propertyless to protect this risk; (4) methods used by tenants in building credit on credit, with resultant devaluation of their $225 average annual income; and (5) exploitation of rural dwellers by organized industrial and commercial dwellers resulting in a poor balance between urban and rural economy—Raper outlined a course for the future.

**System Crumbling.**

This future course, he said, must be faced immediately because the plantation system is rapidly crumbling from forces without and within.

"The first great need is a constructive program for the extension of landownership to the people who now live and work on farms," Raper said. Additional legislation is needed. Provisions similar to those of the Bankhead-Jones farm tenant bill, favorably discussed in the last congress, should be enacted. It proposed that the federal government, through an appropriate agency, purchase good land, put tenant farmers on it under supervision and let them buy it with small yearly payments and low interest rates. It is important that this proposed legislation stresses the matter of supervision. No tenant farmer who comes into ownership would be permitted to mortgage or throw away his land. Rather, he would be assisted from his cropper or renter status only as he demonstrated the ability, willingness and desire to become an owner. Should he lose his farm, it would go back to the parent agency and another tenant would be given the opportunity of becoming a landowner.

"Precedents for this approach to wholesome rural life are found in Denmark, Germany and Ireland. For example, in little Denmark a few decades ago practically all the land belonged to a few families; the majority of the people were illiterate; the landless farmers were improvident, careless, disillusioned. But today Denmark has a model rural civilization. The government helped the people to become owners and these owners have stabilized the government. The Danish farmers have gardens and flowers around their painted houses, an abundance of fine livestock, good schools and scores of co-operatives for buying and selling goods, for hospitalization, and so on.

**Same Chances Here.**

"There is no reason to believe that the landless people of the south are less capable than were the Danish tenants a few decades ago. The cotton tenant, too, can be taught to plant flowers, cultivate gardens, value cow's milk, become interested and potent in improving themselves. When the south's farmers own good land and exercise responsibility they can have co-operatives to produce, to sell, to buy in wholesale lots and to provide doctors, drugs, hospitalization and other essential services.

"Wisely the Bankhead-Jones bill made provisions for the establishment of co-operatives for the service of the tenants who are being assisted into ownership. Wisely, too, the proposed legislation provides for corporate ownership of land, as well as individual ownership of land. Individual ownership, with effective co-operatives, may be preferable in the hill country of the south, while corporate ownership of land, also with co-operatives, would seem desirable in the delta and other areas where large-scale farming is practicable. Many interesting experiments are already under way, such as the rural rehabilitation program, the various resettlement colonies, the Delta Co-operative Farm and other public and private projects. The experience gained in these efforts should be of real value in forming constructive programs for the future.

**Warns of Class Handicaps.**

"Care must be taken lest stifling race and class theories cripple any program launched to improve the lot of the south's landless farmers. It must be remembered that present patterns of human relations in the plantation country are peculiarly colored by the past; one expression of public policy had its origin in slavery, another in the racial dogmas of the nineties, another in the class definitions within the white group which came with the textile mills or with the increase of white tenant farmers.

"Private agencies can render a great service by sponsoring the increase of landownership in any way they can, including the establishment of co-operative farms as demonstrations. The size and complexity of the task, however, and the need for expert and long-time supervision and financial assistance make it clear the bulk of the work shall have to be done by a specialized, non-political, public agency.

"In conclusion, it should be emphasized that the south's poorest and most dependent people—croppers and wage hands—are found on the big plantations, and that the big plantations are located on the richest land. With the poorest and most dependent people of the rural south on the richest land, the need for a fundamental change in the relation of man to land is evident. The plantation system stands thrice condemned before the people of the south in their efforts to achieve an abundant life. It impoverishes the farm tenants and wage hands; it depletes the soil; it disinherits the plantation owners.

"The reclamation of the south's plantation area awaits a constructive land policy—a use of the land which will serve the people who live on it and the larger economy, national and international, of which it is a part. Here is an enormous undertaking, but it can succeed where the plantation system has failed if it enables the poorest farmers to build up the soil, to own livestock, to raise vegetables and fruits for their own tables, to co-operate with their fellows in making their purchases and in producing and marketing crops—in short, if it enables the landless farmers to attain ownership and self-direction on an adequate plane. Comfortable homes, more doctors, better schools and wholesome human relations can be maintained only through such basic economic advances. There are not simple matters, and their accomplishment will require the investment of large sums of public money and an administrative personnel with scientific training and a bold faith in the common man."

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# THE SOUTH TODAY

## *The South, the Court, and the Constitution*

### By GEORGE F. MILTON

(Copyright 1936, by Southern Newspaper Syndicate)

EDITOR's Note: George Fort Milton, born in Chattanooga, Tenn., has been managing editor, and is now president and editor of the Chattanooga News. He was national publicity director of William G. McAdoo's presidential campaign in 1923-1924, and was chairman of the Southern Committee on the Study of Lynching in 1930-1934. Mr. Milton is the author of biographies of Andrew Jackson and Stephen A. Douglas, and is a regular contributor to scores of national magazines and periodicals.

Not since the reconstruction have the supreme court's prospective holdings as to the functions and powers of the federal government been of such vital importance to the South. Now resting "in the bosom of the court"—so runs the phrase—are two groups of cases that will bring forth decisions of far-reaching effect upon the South's economy.

One, of course, is the challenge by privately owned utilities of the validity of the Tennessee Valley Authority policy and program.

The decision as to this socially inspiring enterprise will have its main effect upon a single region, but the court's holdings on the agricultural adjustment acts will touch the life-pattern of every Southern state. Chief among these suits is that of the Hoosac Mills, assailing the processing tax as unconstitutional; next in importance is the suit of a Texas farmer who claims he was under implied duress when he signed his cotton contract, and that the heavy tax on cotton above his contract quota is taking his property without due process of law.

In the spring of 1933 the cotton farmer, for decades a victim of the vicious tenant farmer, single-crop system, seemed again doomed to be the victim of enormous carry-overs burdening the world-markets. Growers of other crops had equally grave prospects. The administration proceeded boldly in the belief that the federal constitution meant what it said in its reference to "the general welfare." The result was AAA, which means that the federal government will bring aid to the farmer just as it already benefits the manufacturers by our tariff wall, and helps the bankers with their federal reserve, government preferred stock and a pipe-line to the RFC. From a long-range standpoint the AAA program is open to serious question. In its details and applications it had many flaws, but in the emergency it did do something for agriculture, especially in the South.

* * *

**Details Revised**

Some of those adversely affected by the AAA have brought suit, attacking as unconstitutional the idea that concern for "the general welfare" authorizes the federal government to aid agriculture at the processor's inconvenience or the consumer's cost. It is true that initially the AAA was almost as badly drawn as the bill that made General Johnson famous. But soon after the supreme court's NRA decision, the president and Secretary Wallace made haste to revise details in the legislative structure of the AAA so it might stand up in the courts.

Early in December the court heard the cases. The justices asked many questions of the counsel, and then cut a week off their usual holiday recess, fixing **Jan. 6**, as their next opinion day.

Those who followed the **AAA** arguments before the court believe any one of three holdings may occur:

1. The court may uphold the act: contract, quota, processing tax and all. The administration's legal experts have worked themselves up into the belief that it will, because the AAA involves a combination of taxing power, spending power, and the general welfare c l a u s e—the three federal constitutional powers the least whittled away by the court.

2. The court could hold that these particular cases arose under the hastily written 1933 AAA statutes; that the delegation of powers in these statutes was loosely and unconstitutionally done, and that taxes levied under them are void. But it might add significantly that, had these same taxes been levied under the act as recently amended, they would relieve the administration of its worries.

3. The court might undertake to apply the ax to the whole tree. To do this it probably would have to create new laws, but a sufficiently determined court will blaze a trail. As Charles Evans Hughes, while governor of New York, remarked, "we are under a constitution, but the constitution is what the judges say it is." The court might not only hold that the AAA delegation of powers was loose; it could also declare agriculture a purely local concern, not a proper subject for federal taxation and alien to the federal purposes for which the congress can appropriate.

* * *

**The Amendment Situation**

Then indeed the fat would be in the fire. All present advices indicate Mr. Roosevelt's reluctance to suggest a constitutional amendment now. He knows that the public thought the death of NRA good riddance, and is not now sold on the necessity for an amendment to meet a purely hypothetical need. But a better deal for the farmer is so fundamental to the New Deal that were the court to blow the AAA into atoms, the president would be practically forced to tackle a constitutional amendment.

Now nearly everyone who has tried to frame a possible amendment to the constitution has found that you can fix the line between what is local and what is national well enough for the immediate moment in a particular industry. But this seldom represents the accurate division point in a different industry; nor is there any telling what further shifts a few years might make necessary.

Really to get at the national interest in such varied matters as agriculture, coal, oil, public utilities, railroads, telephones, telegraph and radio, banking and finance would require a constitutional amendment so detailed that it would run several thousand words in length, and by its precision would tend to freeze that existing situation in a way sure to plague us a few years hence.

All of which suggests it is too bad we Americans are so unwilling to learn from our British cousins.

In 1907 the House of Commons passed an unemployment-insurance bill, but the House of Lords turned it down. Lloyd George then took the very unusual step of going to the king—it was Edward VII—and proposing that the Liberals should dissolve parliament and the country on social insurance. If the new House of Commons passed the bill, it would serve as a national referendum on the issue. Let his majesty authorize the Lloyd George ministry to state that should the Lords continue to be obdurate, the crown was prepared to c r e a t e enough new lords to give the bill a majority. To this Edward, after serious consideration, agreed.

* * *

**Flexible Instrument**

Ever after this it has been a part of the British constitution—an unwritten and therefore most flexible instrument, but none the less as reverently regarded by the British as is ours by ourselves—that after two successive Houses of Commons pass a bill, the Lords can no longer hold it up.

Here is a practical mechanism which might be usefully adapted to our American machinery of government.

For example, an amendment might provide that whether the supreme court declared an act of congress unconstitutional it should specify the exact points in which the act has contravened our basic charter. Then the amendment might further provide that the congress siting at the time of this decision would have the right to amend the act so as to cure these charted unconstitutionalities. It might further declare that, should the defects in the provision seem to be incurable merely by legislative amendment, then the succeeding congress—the one elected after the court's decision—should have the right to repass the act the court had voided, and that when the act had thus been repassed it should be considered constitutional and sound.

Such an amendment would do away with the enormous verbiage needed for any precise definition of federal powers in the various economic areas. It would give both certainty of control and flexibility of application. Then again it would lead to a national referendum on constitutional matters, because the new congress would in each case be elected as a result of a national debate upon this specific constitutional issue.

Of course, there are obvious objections. The belief in checks and balances is ingrained in American political thinking. It springs from our fear of anyone's having enough power to act afficiently. In an agricultural world, where government needed to be merely ministerial, this might have been all right. But in a functional world, where government must do a job, and sometimes do it quickly and powerfully, there is need to revise our traditional system of spliting power into such small parts that no one fraction of it can do anything except by some sort of governmental miracle.

weapon at another, violating the motor vehicle law, drunk at a public gathering, drunk on the highway, driving a truck without the owners' consent.

## A NEW FARM POLICY.

Ten days have passed since AAA was declared by the Supreme Court to be unconstitutional and the debate over a substitute for it is still in progress. From Washington it is reported that a decision was reached yesterday at a White House conference to use the existing Soil Conservation Act as the basis for a temporary program. But it is by no means certain that this will satisfy the leaders of the larger farm organizations. A week ago they agreed on the broad outlines of a program which was to include "incidental" control of farm production. But increasing doubt was cast on the legality of the action thus proposed, Senator NORRIS, among others, pointing out that the Supreme Court had "said in so many words, "'Regulation of agricultural production is unconstitutional' and you "don't have to be a lawyer to see that "point." When Congress seemed to hesitate, the various farm organizations at once stepped forward with their favorite plans.

The National Grange has a program that includes subsidies for exports and higher tariffs on farm products. The American Farm Bureau Federation wants conditional benefit payments to farmers who cooperate in a program of "balanced production." The Farmers Union goes beyond regulation of output to demand a guarantee of "cost-of-production prices." The National Cooperative Council proposes to establish a new "monetary authority," whose duty shall be to "establish and maintain a "unit of value with a constant pur-"chasing power." A hearing will doubtless be asked for all of these proposals before Congress is done with the question.

In the conferences and the discussions which have been held thus far in Washington it is the voice of the farm organizations which are most loudly heard. Their interest in the question is direct, but it should not be exclusive. Any farm policy recommended by the Administration and approved by Congress will inevitably affect the consumers who have paid higher prices for farm products, the transportation companies whose business has suffered in consequence of crop-curtailment plans, the processors who furnish a primary market for cotton, wheat and hogs. If a genuinely satisfactory substitute for AAA is to be found, spokesmen of all these interested parties should be heard before a completed program reaches Congress.

# PATTERSON SEES COTTON TENANCY PLAN AS HOPELESS

"The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy" is a concise and authoritative description of the hopeless situation of tenancy on the cotton plantation of the South. The authors have condensed in this brief volume an accurate but insufficient description of the system itself, the people whose lives are dwarfed and the devastating influence on the land and "permanent" structures thereon.

The viciousness of the credit system is explained and deplored. The tenant is playing a game at which, in the vast majority of cases, he has no chance of winning. To this dilemma he returns year after year out of intimidation, ignorance or sheer routine. The authors plainly show that the absence of tangible wealth or the failure to pay out is but a part of the picture. The other manifestations are ramshackle, living quarters and insufficient and unbalanced diets. High morbidity and mortality are the consequences of exposure and Goldberger's hidden hunger or pellagra due to the "three M's of meat (fat salt pork), meal and molasses. Under the devitalizing effect of such a program of living, the lazy and ambitionless tenant can be seen in a new light, for his outlook on life is one truly without hope. Only an easy going good-natured philosophy makes his futile existence bearable. Thus the authors state that "neither ambition, nor thrifty, nor self-respect can thrive in such a climate.

**Polite Form of Robbery**

Not only is it imposible to develop a hardy stock of ambitious farm owners—the persistent American ideal—but it is impossible to avoid physical and moral decadence." The credit system particularly as it involves the "cropper," the lowest form of tenancy, is little more than a polite form of robbery involving as it does a high rate of interest, frequently 25 percent, or a manager's fee equally as exorbitant, it not being unusual for 50 percent of the crop to be absorved by those usurious costs.

The above situation, combined with the fact that bank credit is geared to the needs of the large plantation owner rather than the small farmer, favors the ever-increasing concentration of land ownership with the consequent reduction of increasing numbers of farmers to the status of tenancy.

**Future Black**

The outlook is not brightened by a consideration of the future of cotton itself. This crop, the mainstay of southern agriculture and at one time America's leading export commodity, is facing an uncertain future in the light of production on the part of fifty nations. The quality of Egyptian cotton, the great expansion in production in Russia and the potential acreage in South America are distinct threats to the sovereignty of the United States. To share in the world market at all means low cost production. This will be attained by large scale operations on plantations of considerable size. The present efforts to perfect cotton picking machinery add to the gloominess of the picture.

The authors point out that even government conrtol with acreage control and pegegd prices have all but escaped the tenants entirely. In too many instances his lot has merely been more miserable. This was inevitable in a system where the landlord for generations has been a law unto himself. Instances are cited in some counties in which coincident with the receipt of government benefit payments there has been an increase in the relief load.

**Is There A Way Out**

In Chapter Five the question is asked as to the way out. The future of two to five million tenants who are no longer needed as cotton tenants is questioned. The alternatives listed are: "(1) starvation, (2) permanent support on relief rolls, (3) the finding of new work in cities, (4) reorganization of farming in the old cotton states." The authors feel that the fourth is the only acceptable choice.

In setting forth the methods of reorganization they propose that the government buy up large tracts of agricultural lands which will be sold to small farmers or tenants on a long term program. They further suggest the need for a definite supervisory and educational service to insure the wise use of land and funds. With this should go schools, health and recreational facilities that would contribute to the well rounded development of the new homesteaders.

Here in brief is an excellent analysis of the deplorable system of tenancy which involves white and black alike, a system that offers little for landlords and less for tenants, that impoverishes the countryside and vitiates the standards of American civilization. What becomes of this mass of underprivileged humanity should be of moral and material concern to urban and rural dweller alike, for failure of rural adjustment will inevitably be followed by a trek to urban centers which are now overtaxed with problems of adjustment. The thoughtful and accurate presentation made by The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy is a forceful challenge for the combined and coordinated effort of all agencies looking to the social and economic adjustment of urban and rural peoples alike.

# Sharecroppers, Tenants To Win Bigger Awards In Planting To Prosper

## WIDER OPPORTUNITIES

### 1936 Competition Expanded to Attract the Entire Farm Family

### TWO GRAND DIVISIONS ANNOUNCED IN PROGRAM

### Prizes Totaling $2,100 Will Be Offered This Year

The 1936 Plant-to-Prosper Competition, expanded to attract the whole farm family and with new advantages for sharecroppers and tenants, will open March 1.

Prizes totaling $2,100 will be awarded in the Competition, sponsored by The Commercial Appeal with the co-operation of the agricultural committee of the Memphis Chamber of Commerce and the agricultural extension departments of Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee.

**Two Divisions**

Changing the policy followed during the last two years, the Competition will be divided into two divisions this year. There will be one division for all farmers and one specifically for sharecroppers and tenants.

The grand prize will be The Commercial Appeal trophy and $500 given by the Memphis Chamber of Commerce agricultural committee in the Competition for all farmers.

A $250 cash prize will be given the winner in the sharecropper and tenant division. The winner of this division will be eligible also to compete for the $500 grand prize, making him eligible for prizes totaling $850.

State prizes in the landowner division will be $100 for first place; $75 for second and $50 for third. State prizes in the sharecroppers and tenants' division will be $100 for first place; $75 for second and $50 for third.

Certificates of honor will be awarded the county winners in each division.

Winners will be selected on the following basis:

1. Living-at-home and diversification.
2. Soil conservation and prevention of erosion.
3. Home and farm management and improvement.

**All the Family to Have Part**

The part that every member of the farm family plays in making the farm home more comfortable and successful will be given special consideration in selecting the grand prize winner.

County agents, under the direction of the executive committee composed of H. S. Nichols, state agent, Knoxville; L. I. Jones, state agent, State College, Miss., and C. C. Randall, Little Rock, acting assistant director of extension work in Arkansas, will have charge of the Competition in their counties.

County judging committees will be chosen by the county agents and local newspapers with the county agent and home demonstration agents serving as ex officio members of the committee. The county judging committee will have complete charge of selecting the county winner.

County winners will compete for the state prizes. State winners of Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi will compete for the grand prize.

Entrance blanks may be filed between March 1 and May 1. Blanks will be available at the county agent's office and blanks will be printed in The Commercial Appeal March 1 and at intervals during the entrance period.

Plans are being made to continue the annual Mid-South Farm Forum and Plant-to-Prosper Dinner.

General.

Agriculture - 1936
Condition of.

# AGRICULTURE'S STEPCHILD, THE TENANT FARMER


**BY JOHN HOLLIS BANKHEAD**

*United States Senator From Alabama; Sponsor of the Farm Tenant Bill*


HAVING been reared in the hill section of northwest Alabama, I have observed as far back as I can remember that the farm tenant situation is not what it ought to be. What is true of Alabama is true of many other sections of the country, for I have been asked by tenant farmers in many states to work out a measure that would solve our great tenant problem—a measure that would help worthy tenants to buy and pay for their own homes.

While much has been done for farmers in recent years there is one vital factor in agrarian rehabilitation which, so far, has not been given sufficient consideration—a factor which affects indirectly the entire economic wellbeing of the nation. I refer to the problem of the tenant farmer and the share cropper, the man who would like to own a home of his own but who is unable for financial reasons to do so and lives on the ragged edge most of the time.

He is the forgotten man of agriculture today, trying to eke out a mere hand-to-mouth existence from submarginal lands that ought to grow only trees or pastures.

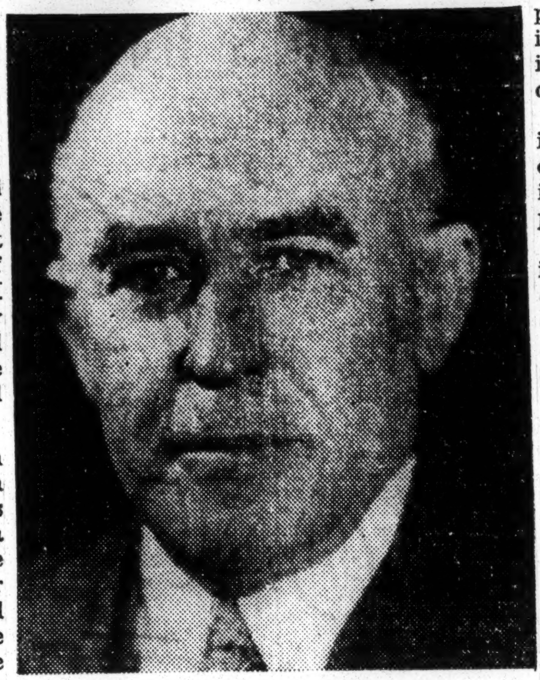
The social and economic value in converting a large number of farm workers into farm owners cannot be measured in money. One of the strongest instincts of the human heart is the desire for a home. It was that insatiable longing which drove the pioneers across the plains in long lines of covered wagons. It was that force that reclaimed the desert and carved civilization out of the wilderness—man's longing for a home, to become an integral part of a community; to feel the pride of possession; to have a share in the common responsibility and the common welfare.

It was in recognition of this universal desire that the early homestead laws were passed and that, later, millions were appropriated to build huge dams and canals in the arid west, so that the longing for homes might be satisfied.

To my way of thinking, a country can have no greater asset than a home-owning, particularly a farm-owning citizenry. Every time we make it possible for a man to own his own home, we erect another barrier against Bolshevism and other "isms." We need not waste time worrying about the spread of Communism or the influence of propaganda upon the home owner.

Radek, the disciple of Karl Marx, once stated that revolutions cannot be imported in suitcases. They grow from conditions within the country. They feed upon the hungry, the discouraged and the homeless.

I think it imperative that we consider most seriously the problem of these peop's



Senator Bankhead

who are, in a sense, a floating population. It would not be surprising if the next census of agriculture reported that 45 per cent of all our farmers are tenants, and that almost half of our land is operated under lease.

A recent survey discloses that the tenant situation is such as to be of real concern in some of the southwestern states. The situation in Arkansas and Oklahoma is described as particularly acute. There have been share croppers in the south ever since the Civil War, but never before has the whole country been so share cropper conscious. Pictured miseries of the dispossessed farmer are marching as a host across our rotogravure pages and there is a general feeling in all sections of the country that this situation must be remedied.

Since 1930 the tenancy in Oklahoma increased from 61 to 70 per cent. Since 1930 the increase in Arkansas has been from 45.4 per cent to 63 per cent, while the estimated tenancy in Missouri and Kansas is approximately 50 per cent. Tenancy in Texas has increased from 57.5 to 60.9 per cent during the past five years.

The trouble with the southern share cropper is not unemployment at all. The real trouble is reorganization of credit. The tenant knows that through credit new riches can be added to the whole community. The absentee landlord is not interested in building up the country with good roads, school houses, etc. Neither is the tenant. Both get along with as little as possible.

But when the tenant becomes the owner, the whole aspect changes. It is impossible to estimate the extent of increased consumption in the way of farm machinery, paint for houses, furniture, garden tools—in fact, everything that goes into the creating and upbuilding of a home, if occupants of these farms own them permanently.

At present the tenant feels like an alien in an alien land and acts like one. He doesn't need relief. He needs money to put in his crops and he doesn't want to pay 15 per cent for it to finance the coming crop.

The tragedy of the foreclosed farmer lies in the fact that this experience has weakened his morale. He not only loses the roof over his head, but his land, his implements and stock. On relief he must go, unless credit is forthcoming to replenish his stock.

This credit at present is meagerly provided—barely enough to pull him through. Of course the interest is taken from the principal at the time the loan is made.

The economic system must be reformed and there can be no permanent recovery without it. Better credit arrangements for the farmers can be acquired only by making a clean break with the past. In this instance it means government control and regulation. It may be argued that this is Socialism, but when the great fertile lands of the middle west were exhausted, the government did not hesitate to build canals and dams costing millions in the arid countries, because the farmers could not do it themselves. This was done both through the Carey Act projects and government projects, with settlers paying back money expended.

This is the problem I am trying to solve and this is the problem I believe the Farm Tenant Bill that I am sponsoring will solve, if its provisions are carried out properly. One of the big aims of this bill is to check the rapid increase of tenancy. Another is to help worthy tenants to acquire and own farm homes. Still another is to lessen the waste of soil resources.

The Farm Tenant Homes Corporation, as described in the bill, is a corporation with financial power and authority similar to that of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation. We propose to create a government owned and controlled corporation. In this measure which directs the president to supply this corporation with $50,000,000 in capital stock.

It would also have the right to issue $1,000,000,000 in bonds. However, there can be no bond issues during the first year of operation and not more than $300,000,000 in bonds can be issued by the corporation during the first three years of its operation.

These restrictions indicate that this is to be a permanent institution and will continue in business for a long number of years. Moreover, it is not to proceed upon a haphazard program that has to be finished in a short time.

The corporation could make loans to worthy tenants, with which to buy farms of their own, at an interest rate not to exceed 3½ per cent. The tenant could also be granted a loan for the purchase of work stock, seed, fertilizer, plows and other farm equipment. If it was impossible for the purchaser to make payments, when he first started out as an owner, the corporation could postpone his payments until he was able to make them without unreasonable sacrifice.

The purchase of farm homes will be confined as far as possible to lands that are now under cultivation. It is not the object of this program to bring new land into cultivation but to try to aid those who need help to make a better living on land already under the plow. Special effort will be made to avoid the expansion of production for the market of crops of which there is already a surplus.

Those of you who read history know that Denmark had a farm problem about 60 years ago similar to the one we are passing through now. She solved her problem by doing something similar to the thing I am proposing in the Farm Tenant Bill.

The Denmark system has operated successfully for 50 years. Denmark is one of the finest agricultural countries in the world. Her farmers practically run the country on a co-operative basis. It is true they had a little difficulty a year or so ago because the world-wide depression affected the buying power of their big market, which is London. But if we could work out a farming system in this country that would help our farmers as much as the Danish system has helped theirs, we would be on the road to a national prosperity the like of which the world has not seen.

The problem should not be so difficult as at first may seem. As everyone knows, there is a lot of farmland owned by banks, insurance companies and what are called absentee landlords. Most of this land is worked by tenants and many of these landlords and owners are anxious to dispose of the land because it is out of their line of business. In many instances it was acquired in boom times through foreclosure.

Thousands of tenants are willing to start on the road to home ownership tomorrow, if some reliable agency would finance them for the farm they want and help them get started in the right way.

Some measure like this will have to be worked out if this vast army of tenants and share croppers are ever to realize their ambition for a home, for the great public lands are gone, and the federal government should, and I am sure will, recognize its obligation to these people and to itself to convert this vast army of transients into a home-owning people.

This program does not create a burden upon the taxpayers of the country. It merely provides credit facilities from the government and the program is so flexible that it can be made to meet any sort of worthy need. The operation of the program will be in the hands of a board of directors ap-

pointed by the secretary of agriculture.

The title to the property may be taken either in the name of the purchaser or in the name of the corporation. The loan principal will be made payable in not less than 30 or more than 50 installments, beginning three years from the date the land is acquired, if the borrower so desires.

Purchasers a[illegible] limited to farm tenants, share croppers and farm laborers who have had farm experience. Preference will be given to those who have dependent families.

In short, it is designed for the man who wants to buy his own land and farm for the future.

**THE PRESIDENT ON TENANCY**

President Roosevelt has added emphasis to the Democratic platform plank dealing with farm tenancy. The President's letter to Alabama's Senator Bankhead and to Representative Jones, of Texas, is assurance that the tenant farm bill which has been languishing in the House for more than a year will be revived at the next session of Congress.

It was rumored at the last session of Congress that President Roosevelt had hesitated to give his personal backing to the bill because of a lack of support on the part of the public. Since that time, however, there has been widespread approval of the principle of Federal backing for a long-term tenancy program. The accomplishments of the Resettlement Administration in this direction coupled with the realization throughout the South that tenancy is an economic as well as a social disease have served to awaken public interest.

Numerous Southern newspapers, the Southern Policy Committee and hundreds of individuals have been active in the campaign to acquaint the public with the necessity of reducing tenancy if the South is to prosper.

President Roosevelt's personal interest in the matter and his implied support of the principles of the Bankhead tenant farm bill will attract national interest in the problem which, while being most acute in the South, is not confined to this region.

The President's announcement comes simultaneously with reports of progress in the discussion of tenancy at Hot Springs, Arkansas, where Governor Futtrell has called a South-wide conference. The spirit of the conference has been particularly heartening. Both landowners and spokesmen for the radical Tenant Farmers' Union have taken part in the discussion dispassionately. Sociologists, economists and politicians have also taken part.

When all of the facts of the South's agricultural economy are laid on the table it becomes more and more apparent that the evils are not the result of landowner oppression as the radicals have charged. Nor is tenancy what it is because of the innate laziness of tenants, as has been claimed by many who have studied the problem in a superficial manner.

It is the system that is at fault and not the individuals who have been caught in its toils—and that applies to both landowner and tenant. Nor does that imply that the plantation system cannot be made to work for the benefit of both the landowner and tenant in some cases. There are hundreds of thousands of tenants who are better off working under the supervision of a landowner than they would be if they owned "forty acres and a mule". For the most part, however, where farming is carried on under a system of absentee-ownership, the result is degeneration for the tenant, erosion for the land and, more often than not, bankruptcy for the owner—if the tax collectors do not get to him first.

Colonel Lawrence Westbrook, chairman of the advisory board, pointed out at the Arkansas conference that the problem of tenancy must be attacked from many different angles. Citing Mississippi's efforts to create new industries, he added:

"Perhaps the next great step to be taken by Mississippi and by some other of the States of our newly awakened South would be the complete revision of the educational system, so that young people and old ones too, for that matter, might be taught to learn trades and skills which would make dollars for them. . . .

"Today 25 per cent of all the industrial activity in America is centered in seven communities. They could all be put in one medium-sized Texas county. Such a concentration of wealth, power and population is wrong from every conceivable angle . . . It means crowded unsanitary living conditions . . . It has fostered rampant sectionalism, promoted bossism and furnished a fertile field for sowing the seeds of anarchy and disorder."

Education will have an increasingly important role in the South of the future. That applies not only to educating the individual for a career in medicine, law or engineering, but educating the man who is capable and willing to work with his hands.

And on that point President Roosevelt has ideas also. He has named a committee to study an "expanded program" of Federal aid for vocational education. The Federal government already supports agricultural education and the South, particularly, will follow with interest the developments of Federal vocational education in other fields.

## *3 Tenant Types Found In South*

HOT SPRINGS, Sept. 21.—(AP)—What is a farm tenant?

Dr. C. O. Brannen, head of the University of Arkansas' department of rural economics and sociology, said there are three classes:

Share Tenant — Furnishes all work stock, equipment and pays landlord fractional part of crops produced. Common division in south: One-fourth cotton, one-third grain.

Cropper—Common only to south. Furnishes only labor in producing, harvesting crop. Landlord furnishes land, teams, equipment and varying degrees of management. Landlord and tenant usually share in current cost seed, fertilizer, ginning in proportion to share of crop each receives.

Cash Tenant—Pays cash rent per acre for use of land, operates farm in about same way as an owner.

**FARM TENANT PROBLEM**

Stating that the southern plantation system is rapidly crumbling from forces within and without, because it impoverishes the farm tenants and wage hands, depletes the soil, and in the end disinherits the plantation owners, Arthur Raper, professor of sociology at Agnes Scott College and authority on southern farm conditions, told members of the Georgia Academy of Social Science in an address last week that intelligent urban dwellers can no longer ignore living conditions among rural dwellers, except at great cost to themselves.

Dr. Raper traces the history of rural sections of the south from days of the War Between the States, citing causes resulting in present conditions of a section abounding in natural advantages that should make it one of the richest in the country, peopled by prosperous farmers owning a multitude of small farms, but which, unfortunatley, is stagnated by abandoned acres, worn-out land, and the mounting problem of a host of illiterate top-soil scratchers who exist only from one day to another, with no hope for the future if left to their own destiny.

To solve the conditions he outlined, Dr. Raper suggests federal assistance along the lines now being undertaken by the Resettlement Administration and proposed under the Bankhead-Jones farm tenant bill considered during the last session of congress, citing as a precedent for this approach to a wholesome rural life the reformation wrought in Denmark, where a few decades back conditions were similar to those in the rural south today, but which now has a model rural civilization, with prosperous farm families enjoying all the advantages that come from prosperity on the farm.

Dr. Raper's address is an interesting and studious discussion of one of the south's most trying problems.

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Georgia

# Tenants and Croppers in Georgia Assured of Full Share of Farm Aid

## *Representative Tarver's Amendment to Bill Gives Benefits To Small Farmers as Well as Larger Landowners in State.*

By GLADSTONE WILLIAMS.

WASHINGTON, Feb .21.—Tenants and croppers of Georgia and other states were given their full share of federal agricultural relief today when the house accepted the Tarver amendment to the administration's farm bill, which insures them against loss of income sustained because of changes in farming practices.

Representative Malcolm C. Tarver, of Dalton, author of the amendment, in a thoroughgoing and detailed analysis of the amendment on the floor, convinced both the committee and an overwhelming majority of the house that tenants and sharecroppers, as well as independent large and small farmers, should receive benefits from the measure.

The original agricultural adjustment act made some provision for tenants and croppers but the provision was never satisfactorily enforced by the secretary of agriculture, and, therefore, they never benefited.

Judge Tarver's amendment was added to section 8 (b) of the bill which determines the amount of any payment or grant made by the secretary when he takes into consideration the productivity of the land affected by farming practices adopted during the year.

**Tarver's Proposal.**

The amendment reads:

"In determining the apportionment of any payment or grant with respect to any land, the secretary shall take into consideration the contribution in services of tenants and croppers, and any loss of income sustained by them by reason of changes in the farming practices adopted during such years."

In presenting his amendment, Tarver said he, for one, wanted adequate benefits from the bill for share croppers and tenants.

"My amendment," he declared, "is satisfactory to Chairman Jones, of the committee on agriculture, and I do not believe there is a member of this body who does not agree with me that it provides nothing but fair and justifiable treatment for poor oppressed tillers of our soil."

Representative Maury Maverick, fiery democrat from Texas, arose in opposition to the Georgian's plea but before he sat down he was in perfect agreement with the amendment's author.

**Supports Measure.**

"I hope the Tarver amendment will pass," he shouted before taking his seat.

Representative Burdick, republican, of North Dakota, drew a laugh from a well-filled house when he took the floor to say he agreed there was no argument that something should be done for the farmer but "I don't believe we should do what this bill or this amendment is trying to do."

Then turning to the democratic side, and addressing himself to the southern members, he declared:

"There was a time when the south believed in slavery and we didn't; now every one believes in it."

After leaving the floor Judge Tarver predicted the senate also would accept his amendment "because tenants and share-croppers mean as much to the upper chamber as they do to the lower."

**Farm Bill Explained.**

During discussion of the farm bill Representative Paul Brown, of Georgia, told his colleagues it did not give the farmers benefits which he would like to see them receive.

"However," he explained, "I appreciate the fact that the committee had to report a bill within the limits of the constitution as set out in the decision of the United States supreme court in the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

"I appreciate also that it is very difficult to pass any legislation of this type to help all classes of farmers in every section of the United States with so many types of soil and such varied climatic conditions."

He regretted the fact that he was prevented from placing in the bill many suggestions received from his constituents which would be beneficial to them, but "we are prohibited from doing so by the yardstick laid down by the AAA decision."

**Intention of Measure.**

In explaining the measure in its entirety Mr. Brown declared:

"The intention of this bill is to give the producer an opportunity to carry on a voluntary reduction and at the same time conserve and rebuild the depleted soil. The prime purpose of the bill is preservation and improvement of soil fertility, promotion of economic uses and conservation of land and re-establishment and maintenance of farmers' purchasing power.

"As I understand, the payments in 1936 to individual agricultural producers will be based upon the acreage that such producer diverts from a soil-depleting crop, such as cotton, to a soil-building crop, such as cowpeas or vetch. It is entirely voluntary and any producer who desires to do so may at the proper time make application for payment or grant.

"In determining the amount of any payment or grant, the secretary of agriculture shall take into consideration the productivity of the land affected by the farming practices of the year with respect to which such payment is made and any act on the part of any producer is purely voluntary.

"It is the purpose of this bill that the allotments and grants shall be fair to the small farmer as well as the large planter, and in the administration of the act this purpose should be carried out.

**Injustices Revealed.**

"Under the former agricultural adjustment act using the base period from 1928 to 1932 as an index did injustice to several counties in my state, especially those counties where cotton was the only money crop. Many of these counties formerly made from 15,000 to 30,000 bales of cotton in normal years, and under the old AAA allotment plan these counties were held down to 6,000 and 7,000 bales. This, of course, was due largely to the ravages of the boll weevil from 1922 to 1932, and many people, being encouraged by prominent farmers and agricultural colleges, voluntarily reduced their cotton crops. As a result of this situation, many left cotton and planted other crops. Some went into the sawmill business and dairy business. This made the base acreage from 1928 to 1932 very low. Now, the timber is gone, the dairy business was not so profitable in many communities and no profitable markets could be found for other crops. Therefore a considerable number of farmers did not receive all the benefits of the AAA which were given to people in other sections of the cotton belt."

# Dr. Herty Discovers Wealth in Potatoes

Constitution

MACON, Ga., May 17.—(AP)—Dr. Charles H. Herty, whose conversion of pine into paper and rayon forecast new industries for the south, suggested today the sweet potato, as a source of motor fuel and starch, has great potentialties.

5-18-36

"Through the new use of the sweet potato alone, the south can realize more wealth than it ever did from king cotton," said the noted scientist, who is director of an experimental paper and pulp laboratory at Savannah.

He came to Macon to speak before the Georgia Association of Commercial Secretaries, which closed its annual convention Saturday.

# Little Africa in Houston Prepares for Fair, Races

## Cows Pulling Plows in Unusual Community; Hoover Buggies Still Popular

By EUGENE ANDERSON

PERRY, Ga., Feb. 22.—Little Africa, down in Houston county, is preparing for a fair and races. The animals will be bull calves, oxen and yearling heifers. The racing carts will be Hoover buggies, wheelbarrows, bovine wagons, etc. Racing saddles will comprise a strap with a stirrup at each end, thrown over the back of one of the bovine speedsters. The time will be as early in the spring as the crop conditions will warrant. The scene of the festivities will be at Smith's store, about half way between Hayneville and Hawkinsville, close by Buck creek.

The Haile Selassie of Little Africa is George W. Smith, the merchant, farmer, and peach grower. His prime minister is his son, Hoke Smith.

The race track has been arranged but it is now waiting to dry out, after a long season of freezing weather nad abundant moisture, something new and strange to Little Africa.

**Mules Lose Out**

As one may imagine, the denizens of Little Africa are mostly of ebony hue, with some mixture of "color." Go along the road between Smith's merchantile establishment and filling station on the Dixie highway, and turn sharply to the right on the dirt road leading back to Grovania, and you will see something new in Georgia. Little Africa farmers will be plodding along the road riding the favorite milch cow or her bull calf. They may be headed for church or perhaps they are going after the mail or to buy a bit of snuff or a plug of chewing tobacco at the store, but they will be riding—not riding on horseback, but on cowback. If the cows and the offsprings of cows are numerous enough several members of the family may be riding, each astride his or her own animal. If the number of trained saddle stock is limited, one of the animals will be pulling a Hoover buggy, or a light wagon, with the Little Africa family as passengers.

And what is a Hoover buggy? Is anybody in the United States unfamiliar with the Hoover buggies? They were developed while prosperity awaited just around the corner along about 1930. They use Model T. wheels, rubber tired or otherwise, and are fitted onto any kind of vehicle, mostly to the discarded top buggy that was drawn by a mule before Hoover prosperity put mules out of business and substituted the milch cow and the bull yearling.

**To Plow With "Bossie"**

Plowing a straight furrow with Old Bossie will be one of the exhibits at the fair this spring, says Emperor Smith.

Prizes will be offered for the most amusing stunts and the most skillful performances of these animals of primitive agriculture in the United States. The bovines were discarded away back befo' salvery time, and now and then afterwards one was used only when a mule or horse could not be afforded. They are as faithful, but they are slow. For hauling timber out of boggy or slick, swampy places, the bovines have been preferred all through the years, but they had lost their place on the farm except for producing milk and beef.

Today, it is claimed, a ten or fifteen-dollar steer makes a good substitute for the higher priced mule, and has enabled many a Little African to provide feed and the necessities of life for his family, since the beginning of Hoover prosperity.

Roman legend says when Cincinnatus was called to the rescue of the Roman empire, he was found plowing two oxen on his little farm on the Tiber, presenting a picture like that to be seen today in Little Africa, down in Houston county, Georgia.

Savannah, Ga., News
March 11, 1936

# NEGRO FARMERS ARE MAKING PROGRESS

## Good Reports From Extention Department Workers

Considerable progress is being made among colored farmers in all parts of the state, reports the Georgia State Industrial College's extension department. A group of seventy farmers living in Wilkes, Taliaferro, Greene, Hancock and other Middle Georgia counties planted from one to twenty acres each in Austrian winter peas last fall. These peas were seeded according to instructions from the State Agricultural College and fertilized with 400 pounds of basic slag to the acre. A checkup on these plots last week showed that they have come through the unusually severe winter season in good shape and the extension agents working in this section are planning for a series of field meetings at many of these plots the latter part of April. In Grady county during the past month 173 acres of land were terraced during demonstrations. These demonstrations were conducted by the colored farm agent and were attended by sixty-three farmers. In Thomas county five purebred gilts and two purebred boars were placed among colored farmers who have decided in this way to improve the quality of farm meat among negro farmers in all sections of Georgia.

At the meeting just closed, more than 700 choice farm-raised, sugar-cured, hickory-smoked hams, shoulders and sides were on display. Many of the farmers in this section are not only raising plenty of this type of meat for home consumption, but have each year considerable amounts to sell which is adding much to their farm income. In Liberty county some two years ago the Board of Education sponsored a range cattle improvement project among the colored farmers around Midway by placing six purebred Angus bulls to be bred on the native range cattle. At the time of the launching of this project, the board has an understanding with the colored farmers in this area that the scrub males were to be either killed, sold or castrated. Recent reports from this project indicate very satisfactory progress. A total of more than 75 first-cross calves have been dropped and six have been reported dropped during the past month.

March brings to a close a season of farmers' conferences and planning meetings, sponsored by the colored extension workers in all counties where they are employed. An incomplete report shows that since Christmas a total of sixty-three of these meetings have been held in the counties where these farm demonstration agents are working. There was a total attendance at these meetings of 7,532 farmers and numbers of farm families.

## BANKERS AND FARMERS

Members of the Georgia Bankers' Association, meeting in Augusta last week, were told by their president, H. Grady Langford, of Meansville, a town with only 169 population according to the 1930 census that they have a "golden opportunity" to render a real service to agriculture.

Said President Langford:

The bankers of Georgia have a golden opportunity to render a real service to agriculture through directed credit; co-operation with agriculture in the control of soil erosion; the development of markets and the growing of crops for which markets have been provided; the development of better livestock and farm accounting, and encouraging our farmers to live at home. When the farmers prosper, the banks will prosper.

A large proportion of the members of the bankers' association adopted the principles emphasized by President Langford many years ago, and the result is particularly observed in the great increase in purebred cattle and hogs throughout the state—an increase that has resulted in existing packing houses increasing their capacities; a plant long idle completely renovated and brought up to date, and announcement that a large new plant will be built and put into operation by September 1.

Bankers and businessmen are behind the establishment of markets for produce of the farms, thus encouraging farmers to join the Georgia Vegetable Growers' Association and gradually grow into the production of vegetables, fruits and berries, with the result that this industry is growing by leaps and bounds.

In addition to the satisfactory growth of the beef cattle industry, swine production is also increasing. A specific instance is that reported from the Hahira section, where farmers who planned for spring feeders in herds of swine are realizing better prices than have prevailed for such offerings for the past several seasons. These porkers, weighing from 75 to 125 pounds, have been selling for 9½ cents per pound, and at such sales several farmers have sold truckloads of porkers that brought them several hundred dollars.

And Georgia can also grow large hogs, as evidenced by the huge porker raised at the Dodge county prison farm, near Eastman, which weighed 1,038 pounds, the hams weighing 130 pounds each.

Despite the fact that Georgia has gained in manufacturing industries in past years, it is still essentially an agricultural state, and, as President Langford so forcibly states, the farmers must be prosperous before banks and business in general can be prosperous. Progressive bankers and businessmen will realize this and co-operate with progressive farmers in every manner possible.

Spartanburg, S. C. Herald
June 30, 1936

## *A Conference on Livestock*

Last Friday farmers, bankers and other business men, public officials and others interested in improved agriculture met in Augusta to discuss the best means of stimulating the livestock industry. There were representative farmers from counties in Georgia and South Carolina and there was enthusiasm that spoke well for the result of the meeting.

Bankers and public officials pledged their aid to this livestock movement which already has taken a firm hold in some of the lower counties of Georgia. Farmers were willing and anxious to do what they could to foster the livestock industry and more profitable diversification of crops on their lands.

An interesting feature of the convention was that it was attended by representatives of the negro farmers who were introduced at the meeting. There are many negroes in Georgia and in the South Carolina Piedmont who own farms and follow progressive methods. It is gratifying to know that they are interested in the growing of livestock which means that they will devote more land to pasture, hay and grain, thereby stopping erosion and increasing the fertility of the soil.

The thought comes to us that the Hon. Ed Smith of South Carolina might have walked out of that livestock conference at Augusta had he been present when the representatives of negro livestock farmers were introduced.

## AN OVERLOOKED OPPORTUNITY

It is strange that the farmers of Georgia, incident to the intensive diversification program carried on during the past decade, have overlooked the opportunity for certain profit contained in the production of Jerusalem artichokes, now one of the most popular articles of food in many sections of the country.

So large is the demand for this toothsome food in New York that, as newspaper readers will recall, its sale was seized on by criminal gangs in that city to organize a new racket which was broken up only after strenuous efforts by the police and courts.

In addition to the value of the Jerusalem artichoke as an article of food, recent scientific discoveries prove that it has interesting possibilities for use in the manufacture of alcohol.

Remarkable as it seems this artichoke has never been produced on a commercial scale in Georgia, although the soil and climate of the state are excellently adapted to its growth.

The Jerusalem artichoke is a native of Brazil. The term "Jerusalem" is a corruption of the Italian "girasole," and it obtains the name artichoke from similarity of flavor of the tuber to the French artichoke. The tubers are similar in appearance to the potato, but nearer the parsnip in taste. Cultivated as a food, it is valuable for diets excluding sugar; it is also valuable as a stock and poultry food; and now we learn it is a prospective base for manufacturing alcohol.

Frost does not injure it when left in the ground in winter, and belonging to the sunflower family, reproduces in similar manner with little or no attention. The stalks grow 8 to 12 feet in height, are rough, putting forth acute, stalked leaves and producing yellow flowers, resembling sunflowers, but smaller. Fiber of the stalks are used for making cordage and coarse cloth.

Here is a crop of great potential value in Georgia—old, yet new—because its value is just being realized and put to use in the marts of trade; the edible portion as food and feed for man and beast, the unedible portion for the manufacture of important articles of commerce and trade.

Mississippi.

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

# BILL WOULD EASE WAY FOR HOMESTEADERS

## Proposal to Use Idle Mississippi Land Advanced

## SENATE GETS MEASURE

Commercial Appeal

**Those Wishing to Use Property Could Make Application for a Maximum of 80 Acres at 20 Cents an Acre**

2-25-36

From Jackson, Miss., Bureau of The Commercial Appeal

BY KENNETH TOLER

JACKSON, Miss., Feb. 24.—A law of the "days of the forty-niners" was revived in the Senate today in an effort to secure settlers on the more than 2,000,000 acres of idle land forfeited to the state for non-payment of taxes.

In contrast to the covered wagon caravans, however, the 20th century homesteaders will have gravel, and in a few instanes, paved highways to lead them to their new homes.

The law, embodied in a bill by Senator Smith of Pass Christian, will permit homesteaders to make application for a maximum of 80 acres to be used exclusively as homes, and to pay for same at the rate of 20 cents an acre.

**Payment of 10 Cents**

Under provisions of the measure, the "entry-man" or "entry-woman" as the homesteaders are designated, will have to pay only 10 cents of the purchase price when taking possession, and the other dime in three years when he has proved to the state he desires the property as a homestead.

In addition to the small acreage purchase price, the usual patent fee of $2 applies, half to be paid when the application is filed and the other dollar when the patent is issued.

The bill safeguards the rights of drainage districts which have bonds outstanding against the lands, and also prevents a person going on the lands for the sole purpose of securing the timber.

A homesteader may secure from 20 to 80 acres, with the provision that half of it is to be applied to cultivation. He must also reside on the property.

The two sections of the Smith bill dealing with the mode of procedure follows:

That any person applying to enter land shall first make and subscribe before a proper officer and file with the land commissioner an affidavit that he or she is the head of a family, or is over 21 years of age, and that such application is honestly and in good faith made for the purpose of actual settlement and cultivation, and not for the benefit of any other person, persons or corporation, and he or she will faithfully and honestly endeavor to comply with all the requirements of law as to settlement, residence and cultivation necessary to acquire title to the land applied for; that he or she is not acting as an agent of any person, corporation or syndicate in making such entry, nor in collusion with any person, corporation or syndicate to give them the benefit of the land entered, or any part thereof, or the timber thereon, or the mineral, oil or gas thereunder; that he or she does not apply to enter the same for the purpose of speculation, but in good faith to obtain a home for himself, or herself, and that he or she has not directly or indirectly made, and will not make, an agreement or contract in any way or manner, with any person or persons, corporation or syndicate whatsoever, by which the title which he or she might acquire from the state of Mississippi, should inure, in whole or in part, to the benefit of any persons except himself or herself, and upon filing such affidavit with the land commisisoner on payment of an entry fee of $1, and also 10 cents per acre for each acre of land entered, he or she shall thereupon be permitted to enter the amount of land specified.

That upon entry made in accordance with the preceding section, the land commissioner shall issue to the entry-man or entry-woman a certificate of entry which shall entitle such entry-man or entry-woman to take possession of such land entered by him or her, subject to the further provisions of this act as to settlement, residence and cultivation. No patent, however, shall be issued therefor until the expiration of three years from the date of such entry; and if at the expiration of such time, or any time within six months thereafter, the person making such entry; or if he be dead, his widow; or in case of her death, his heirs or devisees; or in case of a widow making such entry, her heirs or devisees, in case of her death; or in case of a single person making such entry, such persons, his or her heirs or devisees, in case of his or her death, proves by two credible witnesses that he, she or they have erected a home and resided upon and cultivated the said land for the term of three years immediately preceding the making of such proof, that one-half of said land has been reduced to cultivation, if the entry contains 40 acres or less, and if the entry contains more than 40 acres, that 25 acres have been reduced to cultivation, and makes affidavit that no part of such land has been alienated, except as herein provided, and pays a patent fee of $1, and in addition thereto, 10 cents per acre for each acre of land entered; then in such case, he, she or they shall be entitled to a patent from the state of Mississippi to such land.

# WHITE AND COLORED WORKERS JOIN IN DEMAND FOR FAIR CONTRACTS AT OPENING OF COTTON PLANTING SEASON

## Planters May Resort To Methods Of Terror As Means Of Continuing Exploitation Racket

Memphis, March 19 (ANP)—On the eve of cotton planting in the rich Mississippi delta area, the Southern Tenant Farmers' union through Executive Secretary H. L. Mitchell has announced a strike of its approximately 10,000 members unless plantation owners will agree to fair contracts, the right of sharecroppers to organize peacefully and no more evictions for union membership.

Modern Farmer

This statement was made shortly after negotiations between 108 evicted Negro tennant farmers living in a tent colony near Parkin and land owners in the controversy over rental contracts had been sidetracked, and as federal representatives from Washington met with big and little landowners here to get details of the new conservation program.

2-15-36

Although Brooks Hayes, special assistant to Reg Tugwell, RRA chief, had attempted to have a meeting between landowners and union representatives to iron out differences, the landlords refused to comply, the union declared.

"A strike on every plantation for fair contracts for sharecroppers and day laborers is apparently the only way out for members of the union," Mitchell asserted. "Our people are being locked out. Our only answer can be to refuse to plant cotton or help plantation owners."

Nashville, Tenn.

The union is asking that sharecroppers be given a full settlement at the end of each harvesting year and that legal rates of interest be charged them instead of the prevailing 25 to 100 perecent. Wages of $1 each 10 hour day with 15 cents an hour overtime for day laborers are also asked.

Reports reaching the union indicate plantation owners are planning to resort to violence to wipe out the union which is growing steadily in power and another "Elain Massacre" similar to that perpetrated among Negroes in 1924, is rumored in the making for both white and Negro sharecroppers.

These new developments have nullified the tentative settlement of the Parking case where 108 evicted sharecroppers are living in a tent following their eviction from the C. H. Dibble plantation in January through union activities, according to Mitchell, who said failure of the landlords to meet union men at a conference left matters up in the air.

Modern Farmer

Meanwhile more evictions are going on and threats of violence are made against evicted tenants, apparently with state sanction, for relief administrators at Arkansis refuse to carry out orders from Washington ordering aid for those evicted because of the power weilded by plantation owners in all official circles in Arkansas, Mitchell declared.

BRISTOL, VA.
HERALD-COURIER

APR 22 1936

### A Long-Time Task.

A model farm for evicted Arkansas sharecroppers, established at Hillhouse, Mississippi, is described by Dr. Sherwood Eddy as a "cooperative commonwealth to guarantee the rights of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence to Negroes and poor whites." Dr. Eddy, in an address at Memphis sponsored by the local Ministerial Association, also described conditions in the Arkansas area where sharecroppers have been evicted. "We found peonage, serfdom, disease, and sometimes terror and violence," he said. "It makes a devastating impression to drive through the richest soil in the United States and see the poorest human beings living in tumble-down shanties, rewarded for their toil by poverty, pellagra, hookworm, malaria and illiteracy."

No doubt conditions in that agricultural section are appalling, but possibly not more so than conditions in some industrial communities. Too many of us know too little about the distress and sufferings of thousands upon thousands of unemployed workers, both industrial and agricultural. There now are twenty-four families on the model farm for sharecroppers at Hillhouse, consisting of 2,138 acres, and it is hoped ultimately to have a hundred families there. That will help some, but rehabilitation of all of the millions of industrial and agricultural workers who were ruined by the depression is a task that will require a long time.

# Virtue of Eddy's Dream Is Its Harmlessness

Commercial Appeal 4-26-36

An interesting story is told of Lord Astor, who, upon arriving one day at the Bank of England, was approached by a beggar and asked for a handout. Lord Astor pitched him a shilling.

"What!" said the beggar disgustedly, "you, with all your millions, give me only a shilling!"

"My man," replied his lordship, "I'll have that back in 30 days."

This story illustrates in a striking way what all the experience of the ages, all the theories since the dawn of creation, all the dreams, have taught—that so long as some men work and others loaf, so long as some spend and others save, so long as human nature is what it is, just so long will it remain true that there is no substitute for individual initiative, individual effort, individual opportunity.

The tragedy of it is that reformers refuse to profit by these experiences. It is not that most of the reformers are insincere. Many of them are, particularly those who find their urge bubbling from a call to improve the social conditions of the world. They differ somewhat from the reformer who grabs on for political purposes, the principal difference being that more often than not the social reformer is without hope of personal reward, whereas, the political reformer sees power, position and pelf in the offing. It must be said, too, that of the twain the political reformer is far the more dangerous, because he is tampering with a structure which depends upon law, while the social or religious reformer is merely deluding a single group.

In the latter class falls the Mississippi experiment of Dr. Sherwood Eddy. Spurred to a high pitch of enthusiasm by the so-called plight of the Arkansas and Mississippi sharecropper, Dr. Eddy proposes to start up a co-operative farm beginning with 22 families. A bit more practical than some of his fellows, Dr. Eddy disclaims any intention of attempting social equality, though he expects to accommodate both negroes and whites in his colony. All of the details have not been worked out, such as the allocation of land, the measures that will be adopted to see that every man does his part, how the profits will be shared, and so on.

Dr. Eddy had no trouble in buying the 2,000 acres necessary for his colony; that is, in finding a seller. He has not paid for it yet. This first step should have caused him to stop and think. He would have reached the conclusion that thousands upon thousands of other acres in Mississippi and Arkansas are for sale not merely to Dr. Eddy but to sharecroppers, tenants, anybody. Moreover, the most liberal allowances will be made by the sellers, and every inducement made to settle the new tenant upon the land. Mississippi alone has 2,000,000 acres of tax-forfeited land that may be had almost for the asking.

There is not a sharecropper in the Mid-South, white or black, who cannot by bestirring himself create the opportunity that will enable him to buy a home.

The trouble is that individual effort is not present. What is worse still is that the modern tendency of the political reformer to broaden the activities of the government is curbing that effort. It was not the Civil War that wrecked the south. It was Reconstruction with its false political, social and economic theories fostered by political reformers and imposed upon the people by the government. Amendments to the Constitution, rigid laws, even military rule, were not powerful enough to overturn the natural, age-old, fixed habits and traits which obtained then as they obtain now.

Reformers always make the mistake of charging the deficiencies of the shiftless up to the enterprise of the thrifty. This is why the southern landowner bears the burden of the present wave of socialistic, communistic criticism, when the truth is that there is not a landowner in the south who would not abolish the tenant system tomorrow and go to day labor if he could.

Dr. Eddy's experiment will give him something to do for a while, and then it will go the way of the New Harmony movement, the Rappites and all the others which existed for a time and then lapsed into the oblivion common to all the efforts which seek to mold perfection out of the avarice, the greed, the selfishness, the industry, the hundred and one emotions, habits and customs of humankind. There is one redeeming thing about it—those who go into it, not being called on to put up any money, will emerge no worse off than thev now are.

### IN RE MR. EDDY

To The Commercial Appeal:

Sherwood Eddy did not advocate or praise Russian Communism. He said he feared we might get it here if things did not improve. He did not attack the individual planters. He admitted they were often going broke themselves; he indicted the system of which he said both planters and croppers were the victims. Why cannot the idea of a co-operative farm be tried, but as an experiment? If it fails that ends it. If it succeeds others will follow. Surely the present system, which is being kept alive only by government subsidizing, cannot be so perfect as to make a criminal of a man who is willing to experiment with something else.

JOHN CLARENCE PETRIE.
Memphis.

### SMOKE EXPECTED

To The Commercial Appeal:

In my judgment our good friends the ministers of Memphis, were off their guard when they invited Mr. Sherwood Eddy to deliver his—what you may call it—in one of our popular churches—and on a Sunday at that.

As the report goes, Mr. Eddy has acquired a plantation in the Mississippi delta on which he is undertaking to demonstrate how farming should be carried on in that section. Brother Eddy has a lot to learn about the tenant problem in the cotton section. It is stated he has already placed 40 families on his model farm; 20 white and 20 negro families. Yes he has plenty to learn. Let's watch out for the smoke.

W. W. ELLIS.
Capleville, Tenn.

## Views Of The Commercial A

### PLENTY FOR EDDY IN EAST

To The Commercial Appeal:

I have been reading with much interest of Dr. Eddy and his venture here in Mississippi to better what he thinks is a "bad system" as to the treatment of sharecropper and tenant, by the planters. The doctor's intentions seem good, but we feel sure he is woefully illusioned in his views as to the true relationship of planter, tenant, sharecropper struggles in ups and downs trying to make ends meet.

It is easy to see that at least 90 per cent of the planters have lost all in their struggles to keep going—going with shiftless po' white croppers and trifling negroe: - fathering them, feeding them, burying them at death, even with the planters' pocketbooks empty. It is hoped the doctor's venture will prove successful here in Mississippi, and that his plan will lift us out of the slough and onto solid ground in the making of a living on all sides.

The good doctor should be right on the "show place" every day for a few years, and see all with his own eyes. We feel sure that in three years he will "throw up the sponge" and go back east in despair.

We thought that if the good doctor would use his fine talents back east where he hails from, in bettering the conditions of the workers, he could go among the owners of that gigantic net of sweatshops where countless thousands of women and young girls are struggling from 7 o'clock to 6, for $3 a week, and living in squalor.

Not many months ago, no less a personage than our beloved Mrs. Roosevelt paraded with women and girls out east to espouse their cause in getting something better than 55c a day. Contrast these sweatshop workers with countless thousands of our southern negro cooks getting $3 a week for only a half day's work each day, and treated good.

J. CINEGARER.
Shaw, Miss.

Agriculture—1936
Condition of.

National Commission on Farm Tenancy

# WALLACE OPPOSES BIG TENANCY GRANT

**Without Naming Tugwell, He Says 'Mere Purchase and Sale' Plan Is Not Enough.**

Times

**COMMITTEE STUDY OPENS**

12-17-36

**Share-Cropper, a Witness in Capital, Asks Unionization of the Tenant Farmers.**

New York, N.Y.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—Large annual appropriations and vigorous programs for ridding America of its farm tenancy problem along lines already embodied in administration-sponsored legislation were opposed today by Secretary Wallace in an opening address to the President's special committee on tenancy, of which he is chairman.

With nearly all of the forty members on hand for its first meeting, Secretary Wallace told the committee that "to an unusual degree this whole problem is a human problem and there are many tenants who have never demonstrated either desire or capacity to attempt ownership."

Without naming those within the administration who have urged large appropriations for dealing with the problem, Mr. Wallace singled out for criticism the essence of a plan first advocated by Rexford Guy Tugwell, Under-Secretary of Agriculture, who recently proposed inan interview with THE NEW YORK TIMES that Congress make available about $50,000,000 a year "until the job is done."

It was Mr. Tugwell's proposal that farmers desiring to become owners of farms which they now rent from others should receive financial assistance from the Federal Government and should be permitted to buy their own farms over a sixty-year period during which they would be assured of security of tenure.

**Cites Increase in Tenancy**

Mentioning the rapid rate at which tenancy had been increasing throughout the country, Secretary Wallace said:

"If some way could be found to stop the increase, and the sum of $50,000,000 were used annually to reduce the number of tenant farms already in existence, at the rate of investment per farm of $4,000, it would require 230 years to eliminate tenancy.

"The problem is of such a magnitude that many other approaches besides mere purchase and sale must be found if any appreciable improvement in the situation is to result."

Officials in and out of the Resettlement Administration, who believe in the $50,000,000 a year plan of Mr. Tugwell, asserted that Secretary Wallace had omitted from his calculations one of the most important features of such a plan.

It had been Mr. Tugwell's idea, they said, that a revolving fund should be created for handling the tenancy-aid funds and that loans repaid by rehabilitated tenants should be put into the fund for re-use in financing still other tenants. In this way, it was contended, expenditures for the purpose could be made to go much further than Secretary Wallace indicated.

**Urges Share-Cropper Union**

After the Secretary's remarks the committee members discussed the problem of tenancy as it presented itself in the various agricultural regions. It was the consensus of the meeting that no blanket approach should be made to the national problem and that tenancy should not be regarded as undesirable per se.

W. L. Blackstone of Wynne, Ark., a member of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the first share-cropper ever to serve on any government body, proposed at the conclusion of the first day's meeting that the government should begin its tenancy-aid program by encouraging the unionization of the share-cropper and other tenants of the cotton South.

"This method," he said, "enlists to best advantage the habits of generations of cotton-field workers under the now-dying plantation system, provides a responsible instrumentality with which the government can cooperate, and affords an opportunity for self-education and promotion of the spirit of pulling together, which is essential."

# LAND LEASE CHANGES TO BE RECOMMENDED BY WALLACE'S BOARD

Constitution

**Longer Terms and Payment for Improvements Are Among Suggestions.**

12-19-36

Atlanta, Ga.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18.—(AP)—Marked changes in the present system of leasing farm land probably will be recommended to President Roosevelt by his National Commission on Farm Tenancy.

Possible paths for the reform to take have been outlined by Secretary Wallace, resettlement officials and by experiments abroad.

Wallace has advocated long-time leases to encourage tenants to repair buildings and improve the soil. He also suggested tenants might be compensated for such improvements, instead of facing the prospect of "having the rent raised," as he said they do when they improve property under present leases.

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After the five-year trial, under his plan, the tenant is offered a 40-year purchase contract or a 20-year lease that can be renewed. Annual rentals are held to 3 per cent of the appraised value of the farm. The reason given officially for this is to prevent "mining" or soil fertility by the tenant in an effort to meet rental costs.

# TENANT DISAPPOINTED IN COMMITTEE'S PLAN

Commercial Appeal

**Government Ownership of Land Said Only Solution**

12-19-36

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18.—(AP)—W. L. Blackstone, only tenant farmer on the committee of 40 persons appointed by the president to suggest a national farm tenancy program, expressed "some disappointment" today with the two-day session of the group which ended late yesterday.

"I think we should have taken more direct action, and look into actual conditions now existing, especially among sharecroppers," said the 52-year-old Arkansas cotton farmer.

Blackstone said his idea of a "good farm tenant plan would be government ownership of the land and supervised operation of individuals through co-operatives."

From "what he had read," Blackstone said he "thought Denmark and Russia had done the best" in solving farm tenancy problems.

"You could give 40 acres of land a mule and supplies tomorrow to a lot of farm tenants and they would not have any of it at the end of a year," he said.

"They need some kind of supervision, because lots of them have no idea of business management. The government will have to establish some kind of collective co-operatives in order to help them make good."

Blackstone said "lots of poor 'croppers' have no respect or confidence in county, state or federal governments because they never have had a chance of any kind."

"That attitude is hurting our country," he added.

# 'STARVATION INCOMES' REVEALED IN REPORT SPURRING TENANT AID

Constitution

**Plan Outlining Remedial Steps Drafted by Carolina University Professor.**

12-20-36

Atlanta, Ga.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 19.—(AP)—Hoping to spur the new congress to aid tenant farmers, the Works Progress Administration today made public a report which it said showed "starvation incomes" and "exorbitant" interest rates among southern plantation tenants in 1934.

Dr. T. J. Woofter Jr., a southerner and professor at the University of North Carolina, said he based the report upon a study of plantations worked by five families, or more, in Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas.

He concluded that the average tenant family studied had a net income in 1934 of $304, including what it raised for its own use, and that it was charged 37 per cent interest for credit to meet living expenses. High interest rates were termed a major stumbling block to independent farm ownership.

**Poorest Houses.**

"The houses furnished are among the poorest in the nation," his report added. "Unpainted four-room frame shacks predominate. Screening is the exception rather than the rule and sanitation is primitive.

"The low income for large families provides only a meager subsistence."

The report, compilation of which was said to have started two years ago, has been turned over to the commission planning tenant aid legislation for President Roosevelt.

In making it public, Harry L. Hopkins, the Works Progress administrator, commented that the majoirty of tenants who have been on relief were found capable of becoming self-sustaining.

An administration statement added Dr. Woofter's survey of federal relief and rehabilitation activities among cotton tenants "emphasized the importance of support by the federal government in the future reconstruction of the cotton belt."

Dr. Woofter and his associate made no specific recommendations, merely outlining many of the remedial steps that have been suggested. They made this general observation, however:

"The keystone of any program of southern agrarian reconstruction must be a program of mass education. . . . This situation points to the need of a federal program of grants-in-aid for the equalization of educational opportunity, justified by the fact that the surplus wealth of the southeast is concentrated in other sections, and the further fact that such a large proportion of youth educated in the rural areas make their life contribution in industrial cities."

**Average Net Income.**

The average net income of the plantation operators studied was reported at $2,572.

"The net income ranged from an average of $1,340 in the Muscle Shoals area to $7,149 in the Arkansas river area," the report said. "The landlord's net income was sufficient to pay him 6 per cent on his invested capital and about $850 for his labor income."

Dr. Woofter said the rapid increase in population in the rural south was a factor to be reckoned with in planning for better rural conditions.

"You can't plough under every third child," he added.

A bright spot in the 200-page monogram was a reference to better financial conditions in the south as reflected by loan collections.

"In the seven states," it said, "46 per cent of the loans of 1931, 54 per cent of those of 1932, and 80 per cent of those of 1933, were collected by November 30, 1933. Eighty-eight per cent of the 1934 loans were collected by December 31 of that year."

# Tenant Farmer Reform Shaped

Advertiser

## President's Committee Weighs Many Proposals For Improving Status

12-17-36

Montgomery, Ala.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 16.—(AP)—A wide variety of reforms, all aimed at curing farm tenancy evils, was proposed today before President Roosevelt's tenancy committee.

Secretary Wallace, chairman of the committee of 40 persons, suggested land speculation be curbed and landlord-tenant agreements improved to put part of the 12,500,000 persons in tenant families on a more secure basis.

**Cotton Plantation.**

Under the heading, "the average cotton plantation, based on rounded averages for 646 plantations," Dr. Woofter presented this compact summary:

"The typical cotton plantation operated by five or more families in 1934 included a total of 907 acres, of which 385 were in crops, 63 idle, 162 in pasture, 214 in woods, and 83 in waste land. Approximately 86 per cent of the 907 acres was owned by the operating landlord and 14 per cent was rented from other owners. Of the crop land harvested, 44 per cent was planted to cotton. On the typical plantation the wage land cultivated 45 crop acres, the cropper 20, the other share tenant 26, and the renter 24.

"The plantation had a total value of about $28,700 of which $21,700 was in land, $3,900 in buildings, $1,900 in animals, and $1,200 in implements. The average long-term indebtedness was $11,700.

**Fourteen Families.**

"The typical plantation was occupied by 14 families, exclusive of the landlord's family, of which three were headed by wage hands, eight by croppers, two by other share tenants, and one by a renter. Of these families, two were white and 12 were negro. The average family, the head of which was 41 years of age, consisted of about four persons, of whom two to three were employable. The average number of years of residence on the 1934 farm was eight years for all families, seven for wage hands, seven for croppers, 11 for other share tenants and 13 for renters.

"The typical plantation had a gross income of $9,500 in 1934 of which approximately $7,000 was obtained from sales of crops and live stock products, $900 from AAA payments, $200 from land rented out, and $1,400 from home use production.

"The net plantation income, after deducting expenses, was $6,000. The operator's net income averaged $2,600, leaving $3,400 to be divided among the tenants. If 6 per cent is allowed as the return on the landlord's investment, he received approximately $850 as his labor income, or $2 per crop acre."

W. L. Blackstone, of Wynne, Ark., who said he had been "a share cropper most of my life," suggested the Federal Government encourage unionization of tenants, croppers and farm labor as "first step" in solving tenant problems.

The only tenant farmer on the commission, Blackstone described himself as the father of "ten children, and a preacher on Sundays."

Two negro educators, F. D. Patterson of Tuskegee Institute, Ala., and Charles S. Johnson, of Fiske University at Nashville, Tenn., discussed tenancy problems as related to their race.

Carl Bailey, governor-elect of Arkansas, scene of a recent tenancy conference and tenancy disturbances, said "this was not a class or race problem, but one of economics."

Farm leaders, publishers, church spokesmen and Federal officials all advanced ideas.

Blackstone, the tenant farmer-preacher, advocated written contracts between tenants and landlords; arbitration of disputes; abolition of "commissaries" that "furnish" tenants; lower interest rates and loans for tenants through Federal agencies.

Wallace said tenancy had steadily increased although the government had given away millions of acres of public land in an effort to "encourage farming by owners."

He blamed this on the "gaudy procession of land speculators, timber skinners and land sharks which has marched across so many pages of American history."

Land speculation, Wallace said was "one of the great foes of farm ownership" because "when land values blow up, tenancy increases on the down swing and many heavily mortgaged owners are suddenly converted into tenants."

Wallace said that "some way to reduce wide swings in land values" must be found to "prevent land values going beyond a fair relationship with that of stable farm income."

"We may have to revise our attitude to include a minimum of social responsibility as a condition of land ownership," Wallace said.

At an average of $4,000 a farm, Wallace said that more than $160,000,000 would be required just to check the annual increase of 40,000 tenants in recent years. He estimated that to eliminate tenancy among the 2,865,000 tenants would require $50,000,000 a year for 230 years.

The secretary said these figures demonstrated "that many other approaches besides mere purchase and sale must be found if any appreciable improvement in the situation is to result."

# LONG-TERM LEASES URGED ON TENANTS

Advertiser

## Important Changes Proposed As Commission Moves To Remedy Evil

12-19-36

Montgomery, Ala.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18.—(AP)—Marked changes in the present system of leasing farm land probably will be recommended to President Roosevelt by his national commission on farm tenancy.

Possible paths for the reform to take have been outlined by Secretary Wallace, resettlement officials and by experiments abroad.

Wallace has advocated long-time leases to encourage tenants to repair buildings and improve the soil. He also suggested tenants might be compensated of "having the rent raised," as he said they do when they improve property under present leases.

The Secretary of Agriculture advised the commission the changes he seeks might be accomplished by individual action, with "State and Federal legislation" also a possibility.

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The tenancy commission was informed several foreign nations, notably in England and Scotland, have improved tenant conditions by long term leases which carry a provision, enforced by law, for compensating tenants for any improvements they make.

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North Carolina.

Sanford, N. C., Herald
March 12, 1936

# SIMILAR TREND SHOWN AMONG FIVE SURROUNDING COUNTIES; WHITE FARMERS INCREASING

## In Five Year Period From 1930 to 1935 Numbers of Negro Farm Tenants Have Either Been Dismissed From the Farms or Have Been Taken On As Wage Hands.

During the five-year period just past, there has been a noticeable decrease in the number of negro farmers in North Carolina and a similar decrease in Lee, Chatham Moore, Harnett and Hoke counties which varies from a decrease of 6.2 per cent in Moore county to a decrease of 22 per cent in Hoke county.

Perhaps the main explanation of this decrease throughout the state, and especially in the cash crop area, is the crop adjustment program which was in effect during the last three of these years.

The cash-crop land is owned mainly by white farmers who lease a large part of their holdings to tenants—in the eastern part of the state mainly to Negro tenants.

**Tenants Change to Hands**

When the cotton and tobacco allotments were made, the agreement was between the government and the owner of the land. What seems to have happened is that several thousand tenants have been dismissed altogether; for the main change in the eastern part of the state has been a loss of Negro cropper tenants.

During the same five year period, farms operated by white farmers have increased throughout the state 28,759 or 14.2 per cent.

**Decrease In Lee County**

In Lee county, where there were 1,786 farms in 1935, there were 1,403 operated by white farmers, or an increase of 19.8 over the period. With 383 negro farmers in 1935, a decrease was shown of 14.9 per cent.

In Moore county, with 2,338 farms, 1,931 were operated by white farmers, an increase of 18.6 per cent, while 407 were run by negro farmers, or a decrease of 6.2 per cent.

Harnett county had 4,320 farms of which 3,393 were worked by whites, an increase of 12.3 per cent over 1930, and 827 were farmed by negroes, a decrease of 9.8 per cent.

**In Chatham and Hoke**

Chatham county had 3,243 farms in 1935 of which 2,393 were operated by whites, an increase of 6.2 per cent, and 850 by negroes, a decrease of 9.3 per cent.

Hoke county, which previously had shown a great number of Negro farmers, dropped to 933 Negro farmers, or a decrease of 22 per cent, while the number of white farmers increased 3.2 per cent and in 1935 numbered 711. There are 1,644 farms in Hoke county.

**Negro Trend Changes**

For some time prior to 1925 there was a definite trend towards an increasing ratio of Negro farmers in the state, due in some measure to the absorption of white by the developing industries. From 1910 to 1925 there was an increase of almost exactly 15,000 white farmers and 15,000 Negro farmers. However, since 1925 there has been an increase of nearly 29,000 white farmers and a decrease of 11,593 Negro farmers.

Why this loss among the Negro farmers is perplexing problem and what becomes of them after they leave the farm is unanswered. If the ten thousand Negro farmers have been changed to day laborers in crops, what is happening to them between crops when they are not employed? If they have not been changed to wage hands, but have been dismissed altogether what has become of them? Are they on relief or have they migrated elsewhere?

**Population 28 Per Cent Negro**

It is generally claimed that the Negro is peculiarly fitted to agriculture, especially for cotton and tobacco farming. Yet, it is interesting to note that although 28 per cent of the State's population is Negro, only 23 per cent of all farmers in North Carolina are Negroes. A decade ago the Negro population ratio was exactly the same as the per cent of farms operated by Negroes. Today the Negro population is five points higher than the Negro farm ratio.

Whether agriculture in Lee, Harnett, Chatham, Moore and Hoke counties, where much tobacco and cotton is grown, is better off with a large ratio of white farmers, especially in what has been the Negro tenant cash crop belt, is under question; but during the last ten years the trend of increasing white farmers and decreasing of Negro farmers has been notable.

Birmingham, Ala. News
February 5, 1936

# White Farmers Increase, Negro Farmers Decrease

*The University of North Carolina News Letter* publishes a significant study of trends among white and Negro farmers in its state, as disclosed by the recent census of agriculture. Among the outstanding facts revealed in the census, it notes, are the enormous increase in farms operated by white farmers, and the substantial decrease in farms operated by Negro farmers, since 1930.

During the last five years, it is shown farms in North Carolina operated by white farmers have increased by 28,759, or 14.2 per cent. During the same period farms operated by Negro farmers decreased by 7,500, or 9.8 per cent. This is the largest increase of white farmers in the recent history of North Carolina, and the largest decrease of Negro farmers; in fact, the only decrease among the latter except a small one during the five years preceding 1930.

The study made by the University of North Carolina publication is of interest to the entire South, because it is quite likely that similar trends among white and Negro farmers have been in progress in other Southern states. If the increase of white farmers and the decrease of Negro farmers have been general throughout the South, the trends are of obvious importance.

"For some time prior to 1925," says the publication, "there was a definite trend towards an increasing ratio of Negro farmers in the state. This may have been due in a large measure to the absorption of whites by our developing industry. Since 1925 there has been a decided decline in the proportion of farms operated by Negro farmers, from 28.3 per cent in 1925 to 23 per cent in 1935. The decline has been due on the one hand to return to the farm on the part of the unemployed and other whites who, by necessity or choice, have gone back to the farm, plus the natural increase of the white farm population, and on the other hand to a change in the status of thousands of Negro farmers from tenants to cash wage hands."

During the last quarter of a century in North Carolina, there has been an increase of nearly 45,000 white farmers, while Negro farmers have increased by only 3,717. The disproportion has developed in the last 10 years, for from 1910 to 1925 there was an increase of almost exactly 15,000 white farmers and 15,000 Negro farmers. Since 1925, there has been an increase of nearly 29,000 white farmers, but a decrease among Negro farmers of 11,593.

It is further shown that practically the entire increase in white farmers has taken place since 1930, and most of the decrease in Negro farmers in the same five years. Since this period coincides with the depression years, the conclusion is inescapable that the depression must have been chiefly responsible for the trends.

After examining the figures by counties, *The News Letter* inquires: "How does one account for the large decrease of farms operated by Negro farmers in the cash-crop belt of the state, while all of these same cash-crop counties except six show an increase of white farmers?" The publication thinks that perhaps the main explanation is that this is a product of the crop adjustment program. "The cash-crop land of the state is owned mainly by white farmers who lease a large part of their holdings to tenants—in the eastern part of the state mainly to Negro tenants. When the cotton and tobacco allotments are made, the agreement is between the government and the owner of the land. What seems to have happened is that several thousand tenants have been changed to cash wage hands, in which case the landlord hires his labor for cash and sells the entire crop himself. It is either this, or the tenants have been dismissed altogether, for the main change in the eastern part of the state has been a loss of Negro cropper tenants. But why has the loss been confined almost altogether to the Negro race? That is a perplexing problem and one that would require a large field study to get the answer."

Other questions arise. "If the 10,000 Negro farmers have been changed to day laborers, what is happening to them when they are not employed between crops? If they have not been changed to day laborers, but have been dismissed altogether, what has become of them? Are they on relief, or have they migrated elsewhere? Frankly we do not know. All we do know is that 10,000 of them are no longer operators of farms, either as owners, or as tenants of any kind."

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The study made by the University of North Carolina publication is of interest to the entire South, because it is quite likely that similar trends among white and Negro farmers have been in progress in other Southern states. If the increase of white farmers and the decrease of Negro farmers have been general throughout the South, the trends are of obvious importance.

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After examining the figures by counties, *The News Letter* inquires: "How does one account for the large decrease of farms operated by Negro farmers in the cash-crop belt of the state, while all of these same cash-crop counties except six show an increase of white farmers?" The publication thinks that perhaps the main explanation is that this is a product of the crop adjustment program. "The cash-crop land of the state is owned mainly by white farmers who lease a large part of their holdings to tenants—in the eastern part of the state mainly to Negro tenants. When the cotton and tobacco allotments are made, the agreement is between the government and the owner of the land. What seems to have happened is that several thousand tenants have been changed to cash wage hands, in which case the landlord hires his labor for cash and sells the entire crop himself. It is either this, or the tenants have been dismissed altogether, for the main change in the eastern part of the state has been a loss of Negro cropper tenants. But why has the loss been confined almost altogether to the Negro race? That is a perplexing problem and one that would require a large field study to get the answer."

Other questions arise. "If the 10,000 Negro farmers have been changed to day laborers, what is happening to them when they are not employed between crops? If they have not been changed to day laborers, but have been dismissed altogether, what has become of them? Are they on relief, or have they migrated elsewhere? Frankly we do not know. All we do know is that 10,000 of them are no longer operators of farms, either as owners, or as tenants of any kind."

As *The News Letter* points out, it is generally thought that the Negro is peculiarly fitted for agriculture, especially for cotton and tobacco farming. But it is interesting to note that although 28 per cent of North Carolina's population is Negro, only 23 per

cent of all farmers in the state now are Negroes.

"Whether the Negro is better or worse off as a cash wage hand than as a cropper tenant is another subject," the publication concludes. "Whether, agriculturally, North Carolina is better off with a larger ratio of white farmers, especially in what has long been the Negro, tenant, cash-crop belt, is also another subject. The last 10-year trend may be temporary. But it has been a notable change."

It seems to *The Birmingham News* that the questions raised by this study are of real importance and concern to the South, assuming that these trends apply not merely to North Carolina, but to this section as a whole. It may be that the trends have been more pronounced in that state than in others in the South, because North Carolina is more highly developed industrially than other Southern states, and it is probable that there has been a larger displacement of white workers in industry there, and consequently a greater return of white people to the soil. But if there is a general movement of this kind throughout the South, even though to a smaller extent than in North Carolina, it poses a question which is likely to prove serious. If Negroes are losing out on the farms, when they are regarded as better suited for agriculture than for other occupations, what is to become of them? Just now there is little opportunity for anyone to find work in business or industry, and least of all for the Negro.

What can be done to counteract this trend, as it affects Negro farmers, this paper cannot say. Probably no one right now can say what might be done. But it is certainly a question for the serious attention of Southern leaders.

farm; there is not an average of one milk cow per farm; in number of cattle on the farme, North Carolina has one fifth of the total average of whole country."

There is a definite relationship between farm tenancy and crime, it was told, landowning farmers (especially Negroes) are far fewer in number convicted than the landless ones. Figures show that the average white farm owner in North Carolina has a fifth grade education; the tenant has a third grade plus education; the Negro owner has a second grade plus education; and the Negro tenant has a first grade education. Illiteracy and near illiteracy exist chiefly under two conditions: in the remote rural regions of small accumulated wealth and income and in areas of excessive farm tenancy.

**Water Transportation**

River systems in North Carolina are unusual, it was brought out. Rivers in the west flow into South Carolina; those of the northeast, into the Sound; and those of the center into Cape Fear.

North Carolina is the only water front state in the Union that does not have adequate deep sea ports, although there are deep sea port possibilities superior to many states which have developed them, and because of this lack of ports the state has suffered more than any other state, it was stated. South Carolina ports clear 10 times as much foreign trade and Virginia 60 times as much foreign trade as North Carolina, and yet this state is far ahead of either of the other two in productions.

Dr. Anscombe emphasized many other facts and features contained in Professor Hobbs' volume which was declared "reliable, impartial, and of permanent value."

Winston-Salem, N.C., Sentinel
May 8, 1936

# Dr. Anscombe Cites Facts in Regard To "North Carolina, Economic and Social"

North Carolina now leads all the states of the union in the production of rayon, tobacco, and cigarettes, and is forging to the front in production of textiles and furniture. These facts were brought out at the Current Events group meeting this morning when Dr. Francis Anscombe gave a comprehensive review of the book "North Carolina, Economic and Social" written by Samuel Huntington Hobbs Jr., of the department of rural social-economics of the University of North Carolina. The meeting was held at the Woman's Club.

A long list of charts of all sorts of information about North Carolina was quoted, and the speaker told of the pertinent diagrams and maps contained in the volume. He said that most of the work on the book was done before the depression set in, and that there had been changes in facts, but the changes were thought not relative to other states.

**Farm Conditions**

"The great bolt upon this fair state is the condition of the farms. Like the South as a whole, our farmers are committed to the one-crop plan (either cotton or tobacco). There are 283,000 farms in the state, yet the average farm is only 65 acres; we have 25 million acres of land idle; the state is just about the bottom as to the actual returns per worker on the farm; the average value of the farm is $4,634—in Iowa the average is $40,000. North Carolina cultivates fewer acres per person living on the farm than other state; she has only 5.5 improved acres per farm dweller; North Carolina is at the very bottom of the list in milk and meat production per

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Kinston, N. C., Free Press
February 15, 1936

# NEGRO FARMERS ARE INCREASING NUMBER IMPROVEMENT CROPS

Negro farmers over the State are preparing to increase their plantings of garden vegetables and soil-improvement crops this year.

They are also giving more attention to the production of hogs, poultry, and milk, said John W. Mitchell, district Negro farm agent with the State College agricultural extension service.

The local colored agents in different counties have been emphasizing the importance of producing the family food supply at home and of building up the soil with legumes, Mitchell said.

The abolition of the AAA, with the possibility of a drop in the prices of things farmers have to sell, and the high price of meat have added impetus to the live-at-home program advocated by the colored agents, he continued.

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Salisbury, [illegible] C. Post
February [illegible] 1936

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Ahoskie, N. C., Herald
February 13, 1936

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During the ten year period between 1925 and 1935, the Negro farm operator declined in the Roanoke-Chowan section.

In the following table, based on the Census of Agriculture for 1925 and 1935, the counties are ranked according to the percent decline in the ratio of farms operated by Negroes from 1925 to 1935:

Hertford—total farms 1925, 2,212; total farms 1935, 2038; percent opesated by negroes 1925, 59.4; percent operated by negroes 1935, 52.4; Negro ratio chance 1925-1935, -7.0.

Bertie—Total farms 1925, 3,444; total farms 1935, 3,237; per cent operated by Negroes 1925, 57.3; percent operated by Negroes 1935, 52.0; Negro ratio change 1925-1935, -5.3.

Northampton—Total farms 1925, 3,792; total farms 1935, 3,386; per cent operated by Negroes 1925, 60.4; per cent operated by Negroes 1935, 56.7; Negro ratio change 1925-1935. -3.7.

Gates—total farms 1925, 1,584; total farms 1935, 1,395; per cent operated by Negroes 1925, 38.9; per cent operated by Negroes 1935, 38.0; Negro ratio change 1925-1935, -0.9.

Kinston, N. C., Free Press
April 4, 1936

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For instance, he pointed out, the Negro agents have been urging the farmers to balance their farming and rotate their crops so as to provide the things they need at home and at the same time conserve and build up their soil.

The new program calls for the growing of soil-conserving and improving crops and also the limitation of soil-depleting cash crops.

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Lahem's Double, which has made excellent yields in this county, is one of the most popular varieties this year. In some of the communities it is known as "Jones' corn," the agent said.

He added: "I am confident that Craven County will be among the first, if not the first county in the State corn-growing demonstrations this year, as the farmers are going into the contest with a determination to win."

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February 14, 1936

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Figures based on the Census of Agriculture for 1925 and 1935 and compiled by the Department of Rural Social-Economics at the University of North Carolina reveal that there has been an increase in farms operated by white farmers and a corresponding decrease in farms operated by Negroes in Johnston county during the past decade.

The trend in Johnston county has been in keeping with a state-wide trend. In 1925, Negroes operated 80,966 farms or 28.6 percent of North Carolina's 283,482 farms; in 1935 they operated 69,373 farms or 23.1 percent of the 300,967 farms in the state.

What has happened in Johnston county is shown in the following table. The farm operators include both owners and tenants.

| | 1925 | 1935 |
|---|---|---|
| Total Farms | 7,515 | 7,617 |
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The table shows that Negroes in 1925 operated 18.6 percent of Johnston county farms, whereas in 1935 they operated only 12.9 percent. The decline was 5.7 points, as compared to the state average decline of 5.4 points.

**Trend Reversed in 1925.**

S. H. Hobbs, Jr., writing in the University News Letter points out: "For many years prior to 1925 there had been a large steady increase in the number of farms operated by Negroes, and a steady rise in the percent of all farms operated by Negroes in this state. The high point both in number of Negro farmers and in the Negro operator ratio seems to have been reached about a decade ago. Since that time there has been an increase of 29,000 white farmers and a decrease of 11,593 Negro farmers, with the consequent decline in Negro operator ratio."

The survey made by the Department of Rural Social-Economics shows that the ratio of farms operated by Negroes declined during the ten-year period in 85 of the state's 100 counties. The ratio remained the same in three counties and increased very slightly in only 12 counties, all outside the Negro belt, mainly in the mountain area.

The survey shows an almost perfect correlation between Negro operator ratio declines and the relative importance of cash crops. The largest declines in Negro operators occurred in the combination cotton-tobacco farms—in the Negro belt.

**Major Explanations.**

Explanation of the trend is set forth by Mr. Hobbs in a recent issue of the University News Letter as follows:

"The enormous increase of white farmers and the parallel decline of Negro farmers is one of the most interesting and thought-provoking developments of the last decade. There appear to be two major explanations. On the one hand, the increase of white farmers is a product of urban unemployment—a return to the farm, mainly in the western half of the state.

"On the other hand, the decline of Negro farm operators is due to a change in the status of several thousand Negro farmers from share and cropper tenants to wage hands. The tenant system was on the verge of collapse around three years ago, due to the general bankruptcy of agriculture, especially cash-crop farming. Under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration it is undoubtedly true that many landlords have considered it to their interest to operate their holdings with hired labor rather than with tenants as formerly, hoping to receive larger profits thereby.

"If these are the main explanations, then there remains the question why there has been the enormous shift from Negro tenancy to Negro wage hands, with no parallel shift from white tenancy to white wage hands. Practically the entire shift in farm operator data in the cash-crop counties during the last decade is accounted for by what has happened to Negroes alone. In other words, where there has been a loss of farms, as has occurred in many cash-crop counties, the loss is accounted for by the decline of Negro tenants. The de-

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North Carolina

Kinston, N. C., Free Press
February 15, 1936

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pression and the Agricultural Adjustment program have peculiarly affected the Negro and his status in the cash-crop belt of the state.

"We are not here concerned with whether or not the economic status of Negro farmers has improved or declined. As a matter of fact tenants in this part of the world have never had enough economic status to quibble over, especially cropper-tenants. We are merely concerned with reporting some very interesting facts in the field of racial trends in agriculture in this state, a trend towards a much larger ratio of white farmer operators, especially in the two-thirds of the state devoted chiefly to cotton and tobacco."

South Carolina

Agriculture-1936
Condition of.

Greenwood, S. C. Index-Journal
April 19, 1936

# Advocates Better Production For Negro Farmers

(By L. V. Walker, Colored County Agent.)

In a farmer's life time he has experienced years of success and failure.

Suppose you have in your pantry or on your dinner table all the necessary food elements to maintain life and you would sit and only look daily? Would it benefit you? No! Again, if you would eat once per day what is required for three meals would you be as much benefited as you would by dividing the one meal into three meals and eat them at the proper time? No!

The same holds true in crop growth. When one prepares a good seed bed, uses the required plant food elements at the proper time and gives the needed cultivation with the time of cultivation kept in mind, he has performed his main duties and nature will do the rest. The chances are then much better for success than if you would fail to cooperate with nature.

Soils: Why some soils grow large crops and some grow small crops?

It is said that the land is poor or rich; but I would rather think that it is rich in some plant food elements and poor in others. (If a log is in your path and it takes ten men to move the log and no less, can eght move the log? No.!) The same holds true with the soil's strength. If it takes ten different plant food elements to grow a plant and one or two is absent, will the plant with a part of its required food elements give you the same result as the one with all of its required food elements? Because no part equals its whole.

The proper crop production cannot take place unless all the elements of plant food are available to the plant. If crop yields are to be increased, then it is necessary for the farmer to add to his land the shortest food element or elements needed.

These plant food elements may be added by planting more soil building crops, using more barn yard manure and by using a balanced commercial fertilizer.

The commercial fertilizer is made up of phosphoric acid, ammonia (nitrogen). and potash. The phosphoric acid is necessary to give rapid growth to the stalk or the woody part of the plant; nitrogen gives rapid growth and helps maintain the greenness in the plant and potash gives growth and proper development to the fruity part of the plant. Then, since these food elements above stated are necessary to develop a complete plant, why not use a balanced fertilizer, grow more soil building crops and produce more barn yard manure for your crop use? Water, soil-conserving, diversification of crops, physical or chemical factors, etc., may limit your plant growth also.

Yours for better production on less land.

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Virginia

NEWPORT NEWS, VA.
TIMES-HERALD

APR 14 1936

### MORE FARM TENANTS—BAD SIGN

Virginia is becoming more industrialized but our State economy still is largely agricultural, the predominant power in our legislative halls is rural and our urban communities draw much of their sustenance in most instances from the tilled acres that surround them. For that reason anything affecting Virginia agriculture is of interest to the cities in whose life it is reflected to a greater or less degree, and so the conclusion in the current Univrsity of Virginia News Letter that Virginia farm tenancy is increasing is a matter for some concern to our urban population.

Fortunately, farm tenancy is not so much of a problem in our immediate vicinity. Warwick county has only 253 farms and its tenancy has dropped from 32 in 1930 to 19 in 1935. Likewise, Elizabeth City county has small tenancy compared to its total farms, with only 63 tenant farms out of 392. But that county showed a jump in tenancy in the five-year period from 39 to 63 or a 16.1 per cent increase. York stood still with its ratio of 5.9 per cent tenant farms retained for the five years, James City showed 29 less tenant-operated farms among its 400 total, but Charles City and New Kent showed 45.1 and 52.1 per cent increase, respectively, in tenant-operated farms, running counter to the general Tidewater trend which is toward less tenant farming while the southwestern part of the State shows a gain.

Getting into the picture of Virginia as a whole, the News Letter article, which is by Lewis M. Walker Jr., shows 58,386 farms in operation in Virginia in 1935 by tenants. That was an increase of 10,416 or 21.7 per cent higher than in 1930 and the ratio of tenant farms to total farms in Virginia increased during the period from 28 to 29 per cent. That one per cent gain would not mean so much except that during the five years the number of Virginia farms showed the greatest increase in years so relatively speaking, the new farms in the State have a much higher ratio of tenancy than heretofore. There is a pertinent question as to the maintenance of this ratio, which would further boost a record already the highest in the history of Virginia.

The disadvantages of tenant farming are apparent. The soil is depleted, for the tenant has no long-time interest in soil building. His home life and maintenance of the home has a similar influence in directing his course and so we have sub-standard living as almost inevitable where there is much tenant farming.

Mr. Walker explains that our increase in tenancy may be only temporary and that it appears to be based on a return to tenant farms by white families who lost jobs in the cities during the depression. Negro farm tenancy has remained virtually stationary during the period. These white people may and likely will, return to the cities when industrial conditions pick up. It is held that Negro industrial labor has gone on relief instead of to the farms. But that theory does not explain why North Carolina during the same five years showed the first decline in tenancy since the War Between the States. It would seem that in two agrarian States, side by side, conditons would be the same. That is the inexplicable part of the showing, unless Federal aid to cotton and tobacco farmers has turned the tide in the Old North State, making more tenants able to buy farms and more owners able to keep their property.

Virginia's cotton and tobacco belt show the greatest decline in tenancy, which may explain the situation in North Carolina's farms which depend on the same money crops.

But, whatever the inconclusive speculations on ratios, the fact remains that tenancy in Virginia on the whole is increasing. The only apparent cure is a rural leadership that will teach our hard-pressed tenants the sort of farming that will show a profit and gradually turn them into owners. It is to be hoped that such leadership will be forthcoming. It is vital to our progress as a State and to the development of a home-owning citizenry which as a generality is a more valuable, progressive and desirable citizenry than a tenant group, with its nomadic tendencies and sub-standard living.

Alabama.

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of

# Croppers And Tenants Get Large Share AAA Payments

Tuskegee, Ala., —Southern sharecroppers who have been trying since the Civil War to secure a more equitable distribution of the income from cotton are receiving a larger share of government payments this year than under previous AAA programs.

Tribune

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration, having learned through experience that special attention should be given the interests of tenants and sharecroppers, has outlined the following procedure for division of government payments:

37½ percent to the person furnishing the land;

12½ percent to the person furnishing the work stock and equipment;

10-15-36

50 percent to be divided as the crop is divided.

This means that the payment share for the tenant varies with the leasing agreement between the landlord and the tenant, but the sharecropper MUST receive at least 25 percent of the soil-conserving payments and this will be paid BY CHECK DIRECT FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO THE SHARECROPPER. Under previous programs, the sharecropper received only about 15 percent and the check was made out in most cases to the landlord. Many sharecroppers complained that they never received their share of the benefit payments.

The total number of sharecroppers in the United States in 1935 was 2,800,000, of which one-third were Negroes. During the same year, there were 186,-065 Negro farm owners who cultivated more than 11,000,000 acres. The bulk of the Negro tenants and sharecroppers, as well as Negro land owners, is in the South.

With the present prices and the largest domestic crop since 1933, farmers' income from cotton this season will probably be the largest since 1929-30 and from 70 to 80 percent larger than the low level of 1932-33. In addition to sharing government payments, Negro cotton farmers in the South also will benefit by the increased prices brought about by operation of the present Administration's farm policies.

Tribune
10-15-36
Savannah, Ga.

Livingston, Ala., Home
December 23, 1936

## SUCCESSFUL COLORED FARMERS

S. A. and T. K. Richardson two of Sumter's thrifty colored farmers have made a success at Hamner where they have lived all of their lives. Their father Anthony Richardson was a well known farmer and prospered there for many years. S. A. and T. K. Richardson stay on the honor roll as paid up subscribers to Our Southern Home, following the example of old man Anthony for forty one years and more a subscriber.

W. Huey Chapman of McCainville, is also worthy of mention as a well known school teacher of fifty years experience in the county. Chapman is also on the honor roll.

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Improvement of.

Alabama

# THE SOUTH TODAY

## *Home Ownership: New Hope for the Southern Landless*

By CLARENCE POE

(Copyright 1936, by Southern Newspaper Syndicate)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Clarence Poe, born in Chatham County, N. C., has been editor of the "Progressive Farmer," since 1899. He is the holder of doctor's degrees from Wake Forest College, the University of North Carolina, and Washington College, Maryland, and is a member of the board of trustees of North Carolina State College of Agriculture, the University of North Carolina and Wake Forest College. He is on the executive conference of social service, North Carolina State Art Society; is past president of the North Carolina State Farmers Convention and the State Dairyman's Association, and a member of the board of nine authorized by the legislature of North Carolina to propose amendments to the state constitution. Dr. Poe has circumnavigated the globe to study agriculture the world over, and is author of scores of books and articles on farming and allied subjects.

By CLARENCE POE

The president of the United States has recently expressed renewed determination to secure from congress legislation designed to help worthy tenants become landowners. Senator Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas have drafted a tentative measure and are willing to consider improvements in it. My purpose now is to appeal to all southern business and professional men to join the South's agricultural leadership in working out the best possible program of tenant aid.

In inaugurating some such aggressive policy for promoting home ownership, the United States would only be doing what the foremost European nations have been doing for a generation. Just what phases have worked best there became a matter of interest for me as early as 1912, when I made a trip to Europe to study the whole subject at first hand.

In Denmark, for example, I found that the government would lend 90 per cent of the purchase price of a piece of land and charge three per cent interest, with an amortization installment of one per cent a year for 50 years. That is to say, four per cent for a period of 50 years would pay off the debt, the government advancing 90 per cent of the money.

**The English Plan**

In conservative England I found that a man could buy a home at a low rate of interest by paying one-fifth cash, and have 50 years in which to pay the remainder.

In Ireland I found that tenants were buying farms with purchase money advanced by the British government at an interest rate of only two and three-quarter per cent, with an amortization installment of only one-half of one per cent. This meant that the total annual installment was only 3 and one-quarter per cent, and the purchaser had 68 years in which to pay it all off.

Throughout the last half century the blight of farm tenancy has overspread rural America at an appalling rate. In this 50-year period the percentage of tenancy in the United States has increased from 26 per cent to 42 per cent. In other words, the number of tenants in 1880 was

CLARENCE POE

right at one-fourth of the total number of farmers in the United States; now it is getting in sight of one-half the total.

Plainly then the next big question we all must face is this: If these farmers who have owned land themselves, and so had to pay no rent—if they have not been able to hold the land they owned, how can we expect tenants to acquire homes unless some special long-time low-interest help such as the Bankhead-Jones bill contemplates, is given them by the federal government?

**High Interest Rate**

The tenant has to pay from one-fourth to one-half of his crop to the man from whom he rents his land. Now what chance has such a man to acquire a home under the usual short-term five or 10-year purchase plan, if so often during the last 50 years the farmer living on his own land has been unable to keep title to it? For in addition to the fact that the tenant has to pay one-fourth, one-third, or one-half of all he makes as rent, he has to pay an interest rate that runs as high as 40 to 60 per cent per annum on the price of the things he has to buy under our crop-lien, "time prices" system of tenant credit.

Unless something is done, therefore, tenancy will continue to increase in the South—which means we shall continue to be the victims of about the worst system of tenancy on earth—the worst in its effects both on the man and on the land. For the harm done the land by our present system is appalling. Consider, for example, what a Scotch-born friend of mine, Martin McCall, said to me the other day. "Why, back in the old country," he said, "We think it a crime to rent land one year at a time with no provision for maintaining soil fertility. I know one farm near Perth that has been in the Reed family 400 years—and the Reeds are renters. But they have a lease for 99 years, and like nearly all Scotch-English leases, it provides for four things: Crop rotation, upkeep of fences, keeping livestock, such as cattle and sheep, and conserving all manure."

**Short Leases in U. S.**

So in the old world we find leases running 99 years. Over here tenants do not even rent for 99 weeks—one year is the rule. Over there the tenant is rewarded for increasing soil fertility and penalized for soil impoverishment. Here soil improvement is not rewarded; soil destruction is not penalized. And no provision is made for livestock or manure. Is it any wonder that the present rate of soil erosion and soil exhaustion alarms all thoughtful southerners?

From the standpoint of saving our soil or conserving our natural resources alone, therefore, legislation to help tenants become land owners deserves the support of the whole South. But such legislation is needed even more urgently to save men—to save men with ambition and yearning for better things. It is these men we must aid. What President Theodore Roosevelt said about the Negro, "Help him if he stumbles, but if he lies down, let him stay," represents the correct attitude for the federal government to take toward every man, white or black who calls on it for assistance.

The very fact that a family desires to own a home is evidence of an ambition that deserves encouragement. The man who gets out of the tenant class and obtains a deed to a piece of land, even if he will need fifty years to pay for it, is going to have a new self-respect, a new incentive to work and to save. Given this opportunity, he and his family will acquire a new attitude toward life and society, becoming better citizens of southern communities and better patrons of every southern business.

**Give Them a Chance**

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Advertiser

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4-4-36

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Agriculture-1936
Improvement of.

Alabama

# THE SOUTH TODAY

## Home Ownership: New Hope for the Southern Landless

By CLARENCE POE

(Copyright 1936, by Southern Newspaper Syndicate)

EDITOR'S NOTE: Clarence Poe, born in Chatham County, N. C., has been editor of the "Progressive Farmer," since 1899. He is the holder of doctor's degrees from Wake Forest College, the University of North Carolina, and Washington College, Maryland, and is a member of the board of trustees of North Carolina State College of Agriculture, the University of North Carolina and Wake Forest College. He is on the executive conference of social service, North Carolina State Art Society; is past president of the North Carolina State Farmers Convention and the State Dairyman's Association, and a member of the board of nine authorized by the legislature of North Carolina to propose amendments to the state constitution. Dr. Poe has circumnavigated the globe to study agriculture the world over, and is author of scores of books and articles on farming and allied subjects.

By CLARENCE POE

The president of the United States has recently expressed renewed determination to secure from congress legislation designed to help worthy tenants become landowners. Senator Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas have drafted a tentative measure and are willing to consider improvements in it. My purpose now is to appeal to all southern business and professional men to join the South's agricultural leadership in working out the best possible program of tenant aid.

In inaugurating some such aggressive policy for promoting home ownership the United States would only be doing what the foremost European nations have been doing for a generation. Just what phases have worked best there became a matter of interest for me as early as 1912, when I made a trip to Europe to study the whole subject at first hand.

In Denmark, for example, I found that the government would lend 90 per cent of the purchase price of a piece of land and charge three per cent interest, with an amortization installment of one per cent a year for 50 years. That is to say, four per cent for a period of 50 years would pay off the debt the government advancing 90 per cent of the money.

**The English Plan**

In conservative England I found that a man could buy a home at a low rate of interest by paying one-fifth cash, and have 50 years in which to pay the remainder.

In Ireland I found that tenants were buying farms with purchase money advanced by the British government at an interest rate of only two and three-quarter per cent, with an amortization installment of only one-half of one per cent. This meant that the total annual installment was only 3 and one-quarter per cent, and the purchaser had 68 years in which to pay it all off.

Throughout the last half century the blight of farm tenancy has overspread rural America at an appalling rate. In this 50-year period the percentage of tenancy in the United States has increased from 26 per cent to 42 per cent. In other words, the number of tenants in 1880 was

CLARENCE POE

right at one-fourth of the total number of farmers in the United States; now it is getting in sight of one-half the total.

Plainly then the next big question we all must face is this: If these farmers who have owned land themselves, and so had to pay no rent—if they have not been able to hold the land they owned, how can we expect tenants to acquire homes unless some special long-time low-interest help such as the Bankhead-Jones bill contemplates, is given them by the federal government?

**High Interest Rate**

The tenant has to pay from one-fourth to one-half of his crop to the man from whom he rents his land. Now what chance has such a man to acquire a home under the usual short-term five or 10-year purchase plan, if so often during the last 50 years the farmer living on his own land has been unable to keep title to it? For in addition to the fact that the tenant has to pay one-fourth, one-third, or one-half of all he makes as rent, he has to pay an interest rate that runs as high as 40 to 60 per cent per annum on the price of the things he has to buy under our crop-lien, "time prices" system of tenant credit.

Unless something is done, therefore, tenancy will continue to increase in the South—which means we shall continue to be the victims of about the worst system of tenancy on earth—the worst in its effects both on the man and on the land. For the harm done the land by our present system is appalling. Consider, for example, what a Scotch-born friend of mine, Martin McCall, said to me the other day. "Why, back in the old country," he said, "We think it a crime to rent land one year at a time with no provision for maintaining soil fertility. I know one farm near Perth that has been in the Reed family 400 years—and the Reeds are renters. But they have a lease for 99 years, and like nearly all Scotch-English leases, it provides for four things: Crop rotation, upkeep of fences, keeping livestock, such as cattle and sheep, and conserving all manure."

**Short Leases in U. S.**

So in the old world we find leases running 99 years. Over here tenants do not even rent for 99 weeks—one year is the rule. Over there the tenant is rewarded for increasing soil fertility and penalized for soil impoverishment. Here soil improvement is not rewarded; soil destruction is not penalized. And no provision is made for livestock or manure. Is it any wonder that the present rate of soil erosion and soil exhaustion alarms all thoughtful southerners?

From the standpoint of saving our soil or conserving our natural resources alone, therefore, legislation to help tenants become land owners deserves the support of the whole South. But such legislation is needed even more urgently to save men—to save men with ambition and yearning for better things. It is these men we must aid. What President Theodore Roosevelt said about the Negro, "Help him if he stumbles, but if he lies down, let him stay," represents the correct attitude for the federal government to take toward every man, white or black who calls on it for assistance.

The very fact that a family desires to own a home is evidence of an ambition that deserves encouragement. The man who gets out of the tenant class and obtains a deed to a piece of land, even if he will need fifty years to pay for it, is going to have a new self-respect, a new incentive to work and to save. Given this opportunity, he and his family will acquire a new attitude toward life and society, becoming better citizens of southern communities and better patrons of every southern business.

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## MOBILE'S TUNG OIL PLANT

Mobile has been selected as the site for a tung crushing and extracting plant which will be the third industry of this type in the South.

Cultivation of the tung nut in South Alabama and Mississippi and in North Florida has been undertaken on a large scale in the last five years. The establishment of plants for extracting the oil from the nut which is used in the manufacture of paints and varnishes is evidence that production in large commercial quantities has been accomplished.

For many years the oil has been imported from foreign countries, but the success of the industry indicates that the time may not be far off when the United States will not have to depend on outside sources.

Selma, Ala. Times
July 15, 1936

## THE BUILDING FOR NEGROES

Slight and immaterial considerations should not be allowed to defeat the plan to erect a building in Selma for the use of the negro farmers of the county who come here in such numbers to sell and trade and buy their supplies from week to week throughout the year. Through the untiring efforts of Dr. E. W. Gamble a direct grant of about $17,000 has been secured from the PWA to go forward with this project.

Unlike most government enterprises, funds for this project do not have to be "matched," but are supplied entirely by a government grant. The condition stipulates that the lot must be provided by the City, which it is stated, will cost $2,500. The negro farmers have by voluntary effort raised $1000 of this amount, leaving an obligation of only $1500 to be assumed by the City. Of course, the upkeep of the enterprise would devolve upon the City, but this would not be an unreasonable item.

There are 42,000 negroes, making up 77.3 per cent of the population of Dallas county. These people, with rare exceptions are law-abiding, peace-loving and in some cases tax-paying citizens. Anyway they contribute substantially to the economic welfare of the community. They deserve consideration at the hands of our white citizens, who own most of the property and run the government. The relations of the races here have always been harmonious and mutually helpful. As an enduring token of good-will all forward-looking citizens should take an interest in the proposed enterprise for the negro farmers and urge its erection and maintenance at the light cost it will entail. There could be no finer or more worthwhile small investment.

SELMA, ALA.
**TIMES-JOURNAL**

JUL 15 1936


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BIRMINGHAM, ALA.
**NEWS**

JUL 17 1936

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# Erosion Controlled By Kudzu Plants

AUBURN, ALA., Sept. 20.—(Special)—Planting of almost 500,000 kudzu crowns has brought under control approximately 475 acres of badly eroded land in the Soil Conservation Service demonstration project near Anniston, according to A. L. Harrell, associate agronomist of the Soil Conservation Service.

Approximately 150 acres were planted to one-year-old seedling crowns and 325 acres to two-year-old crowns produced from runners.

Drouth during the Spring and Summer resulted in a high rate of mortality of each kind. Yet, an actual count showed that a larger percentage of seedling crowns survived.

Both kinds of crowns were given equal care in handling and planting, says Mr. Harrell. It is believed that the difference in survival is due to the difference in the root systems. Seedling crowns have a long, slender single tap-root, while crowns produced from runners have a lateral root system.

This difference made it possible to set the seedlings deeper. They can also be transplanted with less injury to the root system.

Approximately 1,000 crowns can be grown from a pound of seed. Since seedling crowns survived unfavorable weather conditions better than crowns produced by vines it is logical to assume, Harrell says that growing crowns from seed evidently is the best method of propagating kudzu.

Arkansas

Agriculture—1936
Improvement of

# PROGRAM MAPPED FOR SHARE-CROPPERS

## Baptist College Board Approves Rural Work

LITTLE ROCK, Jan. 24.—Addition of a program of rural extension work specifically directed toward improvement in operation of the sharecropping system in Arkansas has been approved by the board of trustees of Arkansas Baptist College.

Suggestion for such a program was made at a meeting here Wednesday by Dr. C. C. Brandon, Sr., Augusta, a member of the board. Dr. Brandon was named dean of the extension activity and authorized to inaugurate the program without financially encumbering the college.

While formerly engaged in farm vocational work promoted by the the Arkansas state department of education, Dr. Brandon made a special study of sharecropping.

Dr. Brandon plans to develop better understanding and larger profits among sharecroppers through a series of "Goodwill Institutes" to be held for several days each in various localities under sponsorship of chambers of commerce, business institutions, churches and other organizations.

At these institutes the "science" of sharecropping would be taught, with examples "of the beautiful technique of peaceful and profitable sharecropping" explained and analyzed.

Adoption of the new program was announced by Dr. J. F. Clark vice chairman of the board of trustees.

# BIRTH CONTROL STUDY PREPARED FOR TENANT

Commercial Appeal

## Arkansas Commission Meets on Probe Today

## FUTRELL BACKING WORK

### Over 40 Suggestions Made for Ending Sharecropper Problem—Question of Sterilization Thought Unfit

10-20-36

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Oct. 19.—More than two score specific proposals for remedying the sharecropper-tenant problem will be examined by the program committee of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission when it meets here tomorrow to shape an attack on the problem.

**Education Stressed**

Suggestions for turning tenants into a farm-home-ownership class—prime objective stated by Governor Futrell when he created the commission—predominated in the proposals which have been submitted to the program committee, but the list runs through a veritable catalog of correlative courses of action ranging from health and education to industrialization of farm areas.

Two members of the commission suggested a program of birth control information, and one tentatively advanced "sterilization of the unfit," but Commission Chairman C. E. Palmer indicated he believed the latter proposal outside the province of his board.

Stressing the need for education Connie J. Bonslagel, state extension worker on leave with the Resettlement Administration, said in a brief: "State regulated birth 'control' education should be included in the adult education."

A. Carlson, lumberman and commission member of Trumann, in a lengthy analysis, said under a subheading of "Birth Control and Possible Sterilization of the Unfit":

"While we recognize that this is a highly controversial issue, yet I am quite convinced that reasonable, sane instruction in birth control would be of immense value to a large number of tenants. Approved preventative measures are available which are not particularly harmful, and which are sufficiently cheap so that they can be employed by the average tenant.

"The question of sterilization is probably more highly controversial even than birth control, but it is my opinion that a sane reasonable law in this matter will improve conditions materially."

Commenting specifically on Carlson's brief, Chairman Palmer said on behalf of himself and Governor Futrell that "it goes outside the scope of the work for which this commission was created."

**Industrialization Cited**

A suggestion for industrialization of sections of the cotton south advanced by Col. Lawrence Westbrook, chairman of the advisory board of the WPA when the commission was organized in Hot Springs last month, echoed in of the submitted proposals.

Others emphasized joint action of state and federal governments to finance tenants' purchase of small farms, an immediate attack on heath conditions, creation of county arbitration boards to settle landlord-tenant disputes, experimental co-operative farm colonies and graduated land taxes to discourage large holdings.

The Arkansas commission plans a program of state action with recommendations for joint action in the southern states and by the federal government.

Governor Futrell, who retires from office in January, has projected a southwide conference on the subject, to be held before the end of the year.

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Arkansas. — Negro

# NEGRO FARM COLONY PLANNED IN ARKANSAS

## College Head Says Project Is Probable Next Year

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., Nov. 25.—(AP)—Dr. J. B. Watson, president of Arkansas Mechanical and Normal College for Negroes, announced today that a 13,000-acre plantation owned by former Governor Frank O. Lowden of Illinois would be converted next year into Arkansas' first privately sponsored negro farm colony.

11-26-36

The negro educator said 150 families — mostly sharecroppers from Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi—would be moved onto the "South Bend" plantation near Gould in the southeast Arkansas delta section.

The colony will be managed by Dr. Watson and three negro farmers. The college president, attending final sessions of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission here, said that Lowden is selling the land to the negroes "at terms much more reasonable than those paid by the Resettlement Administration for its tracts in this state."

The plantation will be divided into 20-acre plots, with the colonists being allowed to purchase one or more tracts. Most of the land is in cultivation but a part is in woodland.

Lowden operated the South Bend plantation for nearly two decades and before the 1927 floods it was known as one of the richest in the south. The Arkansas River swept a heavy layer of silt over part of the acreage that year and some farmers regarded the plantation's value as seriously impaired.

"That was a mistake," Watson said. "That silt formed a protective layer for the soil and alfalfa planted on it this year produced a bumper crop. Some of the sharecroppers produced a bale of cotton to the acre. With proper cultivation it will produce more than that."

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of.

General

THIS month, ten mechanical cotton pickers will be tested at regular work in the fields of the South, and if the results are as good as the inventors and many other people expect, the Rust brothers, of Memphis, Tennessee, will have solved the last great problem in the mechanization of the cotton industry. New Republic readers may remember the principle of the Rust machine, described a year ago in our pages. A series of smooth metal rods are moistened and brought into contact with the opened bolls, so that the cotton sticks to these "fingers" until it is removed inside the machine. The picker is driven, under its own power, through the cotton field, straddling one or two rows. One expert has said the machine is already better as a cotton picker than the first Model T Ford was as a car. The Rust brothers' experiments have brought many forebodings as to loss of employment of several million persons now working on the plantations, particularly since the machine makes possible the introduction of mechanical methods, already perfected, in other processes of cotton growing—methods heretofore ignored because many workers were available the year round, though urgently needed only at cotton-picking time. To what extent these forebodings about technological unemployment are justified, remains to be seen. The Rust brothers differ from many other inventors in that they are quite as much concerned about possible social developments following the introduction of their machine as they are about the machine itself. Everything depends, of course, upon the success of the experimental models that will go to work this month for the first time.

# INVENTORS ASK U. S. TO AVOID 'DISASTER

## Brothers Say Cotton Picker Will Ruin 'Croppers'

*By United Press.*

MEMPHIS, Aug. 26.—Mack D. Rust, 36-year-old co-inventor of a mechanical cotton picker, today called on Government agencies to resettle thousands of tenant families to prevent their being thrown out of employment by general use of the machine.

Mack said once he was convinced that exploitation of the invention by himself and his brother, John D., or anyone else would create untold diaster among the people. Thrown on the market, it would mean in the sharecropper country that 75 per cent of the labor population would be thrown out of employment.

"We are not willing that this should happen."

# POLITICIAN FLAYS COTTON MACHINE

## Memphis Leader Asserts Rust Picker Will Cause More Farm Unemployment

MEMPHIS, TENN., Sept. 5.—(AP)—Mack Rust termed a political leader's criticism of merchanical cotton pickers today "an honest, but mistaken opinion."

The co-inventor of the picker, demonstrated Monday at Stoneville, Miss., said he was too busy turning out other pickers at his factory here to give sufficient time to a thoughtful reply to Edward H. Crump, leader of the Shelby County (Memphis) political organization.

That influential figure in Tennessee affairs said that "machinery is killing America," and that "cotton picking machinery is the "least needed."

Rust, carrying on the work here while his brother, John, is aiding the Soviet Government in picker tests in Turkestan, said he felt Mr. Crump might feel differently if he understood our program."

Crump said the picker would mean "more unemployment" while hand picking affords work "every Fall for practically every member of a farmer's family, just as chopping cotton and corn does in the Spring."

**Suggests Ban By Law**

"Is that to be cut off?" he asked. "If so, there should be legislation in every state against it. I believe it can be done in Tennessee."

Crump picked cotton as "a small boy," he said, and has land in cotton now. He said he knew "what I'm talking about." He added he understood "the picker has not been perfected" and there would be time to worry about it later.

Rust said he was satisfied with tests of the picker and that nearly all farmers agree "we have found the basic principle."

"We realize the sudden 'dumping' of scores of pickers on the market would be harmful for labor," Rust said. "That is the very reason we are laying our production and distribution plans so carefully.

**To Lease Machines**

"Our plan is to lease the machines under an arrangement whereby the users would agree to keep a reasonable number of well-paid workers. Part of the profits will be used to educate and resettle displaced workers. The picker will bring an end to cotton picking's backbreaking toil.

"We believe legislation to bar the picker would be detrimental to the very people it would be intended to benefit. Our foreign demand is ample to keep us busy for many months. We would regret to see the American farmer placed in the unfavorable position of wanting machines and not being able to get them, while scores in other countries were using the machines to reduce their production costs and take the foreign trade away from this country."

# Cotton Road Given Trial In New York

ALBANY, N. Y., Aug. 29—(AP)—An experimental "cotton road," an entirely new type of highway in New York, will be laid by the State Highway Department for a distance of six miles between Mariaville and Amsterdam. It will be the first of its kind to be completed in the State, the department said today.

The new cotton road, still in the experimental stage as far as New York is concerned, is designed to replace gravel roads on which the maintenance is extremely expensive. In appearance there will be little difference between the "cotton roads" and the so-called "black roads" of bituminous macadam.

David Noonan, deputy State Highway Commissioner in charge of maintenance, said 30 miles of the experimental "cotton road" will be built this year throughout the state. The cotton, like sheeting is a surplus product handled by the Government and is being donated to the State for the experiment.

South Carolina has had some success with these highways, Commissioner Noonan said, and added if they are as good good as they are supposed to be, and are proven so under tests of two or three years, it may be the "cotton road" will supplant the gravel road in this State."

# RUST COTTON PICKER STIRS PROS AND CONS

## Few in Memphis Dismiss Machine as Valueless

(2)

## SOME THINK IMPRACTICAL

### Most of Brokers Here Aver, If Successful, No Overturn in Economic Conditions of the South Likely

Memphis cotton men received reports of the Rust cotton picker yesterday with considerable skepticism but most of them withheld opinions until they have had a chance to see it in operation.

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**Crump Not Worried**

Dabney Crump of Anderson, Clayton & Co. believes the picker is sound in principle but he does not think it will cause any economic or sociological upheaval. "Even if it is practical, it does not mean that common labor will disappear from the cotton farm. It would give the tenants an opportunity to grow and harvest more food and feed crops. The cotton gin supplanted hand labor of picking seeds out of cotton. One girl in a textile mill spins as much cloth as 36,000 girls can spin ina day. But inventions of labor saving devices create more employment.

"I believe that for the picker to be successful, cotton plants of standard height and size must be developed, with bolls at the top, middle and bottom opening together. And some improvements are needed on the machine—to prevent knocking the cotton on the ground, for instance—perhaps a tractor pushing instead of pulling would help," he said.

Dr. Tait Butler, editor of the Progressive Farmer, is not worried about labor unemployment as a result of the picker proving a success. "There will be no social revolution—the picker will be introduced gradually, over a period of 10 to 20 years, even if it works. Only the big farms will be able to afford a picker—the only way small farmers can use them is on a share system, and southern farmers are not familiar with the practice of small grain farmers who give the thresher owner part of the crop for his services. A collectively-owned picker would not work because the joint owners could not agree on who would use it first."

Dr. Butler said he had seen other mechanical cotton pickers and that they had the same fault as the Rust—picking green leaves with the cotton which stain the fiber. "But, its practicability will depend on its cost of operation and the grade of cotton it produces. It would have the advantage of picking the cotton easy and quickly to prevent deterioration."

**Would Help Southwest**

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THIS month, ten mechanical cotton pickers will be tested at regular work in the fields of the South, and if the results are as good as the inventors and many other people expect, the Rust brothers, of Memphis, Tennessee, will have solved the last great problem in the mechanization of the cotton industry. New Republic readers may remember the principle of the Rust machine, described a year ago in our pages. A series of smooth metal rods are moistened and brought into contact with the opened bolls, so that the cotton sticks to these "fingers" until it is removed inside the machine. The picker is driven, under its own power, through the cotton field, straddling one or two rows. One expert has said the machine is already better as a cotton picker than the first Model T Ford was as a car. The Rust brothers' experiments have brought many forebodings as to loss of employment of several million persons now working on the plantations, particularly since the machine makes possible the introduction of mechanical methods, already perfected, in other processes of cotton growing—methods heretofore ignored because many workers were available the year round, though urgently needed only at cotton-picking time. To what extent these forebodings about technological unemployment are justified, remains to be seen. The Rust brothers differ from many other inventors in that they are quite as much concerned about possible social developments following the introduction of their machine as they are about the machine itself. Everything depends, of course, upon the success of the experimental models that will go to work this month for the first time.

# INVENTORS ASK U. S. TO AVOID 'DISASTER

## Brothers Say Cotton Picker Will Ruin 'Croppers'

By United Press.

MEMPHIS, Aug. 26.—Mack D. Rust, 36-year-old inventor of a mechanical cotton picker, today called on Government agencies to resettle thousands of tenant families to prevent their being thrown out of employment by general use of the machine.

Mack said once he was convinced that exploitation of the invention by himself and his brother, John D., or anyone else would create untold disaster among the people. Thrown on the market, it would mean in the sharecropper country that 75 per cent of the labor population would be thrown out of employment.

"We are not willing that this should happen."

# POLITICIAN FLAYS COTTON MACHINE

## Memphis Leader Asserts Rust Picker Will Cause More Farm Unemployment

MEMPHIS, TENN., Sept. 5.—(AP)—Mack Rust termed a political leader's criticism of merchanical cotton pickers today "an honest, but mistaken opinion."

The co-inventor of the picker, demonstrated Monday at Stoneville, Miss., said he was too busy turning out other pickers at his factory here to give sufficient time to a thoughtful reply to Edward H. Crump, leader of the Shelby County (Memphis) political organization.

That influential figure in Tennessee affairs said that "machinery is killing America," and that cotton picking machinery is the "least needed."

Rust, carrying on the work here while his brother, John, is aiding the Soviet Government in picker tests in Turkestan, said he felt that Crump might feel differently if he understood our program."

Crump said the picker would mean "more unemployment" while hand picking affords work "every Fall for practically every member of a farmer's family, just as chopping cotton and corn does in the Spring."

**Suggests Ban By Law**

"Is that to be cut off?" he asked. "If so, there should be legislation in every state against it. I believe it can be done in Tennessee."

Crump picked cotton as "a small boy," he said, and has land in cotton now. He said he knew "what I'm talking about." He added he understood "the picker has not been perfected" and there would be time to worry about it later.

Rust said he was satisfied with tests of the picker and that nearly all farmers agree "we have found the basic principle."

"We realize the sudden 'dumping' of scores of pickers on the market would be harmful for labor," Rust said. "That is the very reason we are laying our production and distribution plans so carefully.

**To Lease Machines**

"Our plan is to lease the machines under an arrangement whereby the users would agree to keep a reasonable number of well-paid workers. Part of the profits will be used to educate and resettle displaced workers. The picker will bring an end to cotton picking's backbreaking toil.

"We believe legislation to bar the picker would be detrimental to the very people it would be intended to benefit. Our foreign demand is ample to keep us busy for many months. We would regret to see the American farmer placed in the unfavorable position of wanting machines and not being able to get them, while scores in other countries were using the machines to reduce their production costs and take the foreign trade away from this country."

# Cotton Road Given Trial In New York

ALBANY, N. Y., Aug. 29—(AP)—An experimental "cotton road," an entirely new type of highway in New York, will be laid by the State Highway Department for a distance of six miles between Marlaville and Amsterdam. It will be the first of its kind to be completed in the State, the department said today.

The new cotton road, still in the experimental stage as far as New York is concerned, is designed to replace gravel roads on which the maintenance is extremely expensive. In appearance there will be little difference between the "cotton roads" and the so-called "black roads" of bituminous macadam.

David Noonan, deputy State Highway Commissioner in charge of maintenance, said 30 miles of the experimental "cotton road" will be built this year throughout the state. The cotton, like sheeting, is a surplus product handled by the Government and is being donated to the State for the experiment.

South Carolina has had some success with these highways, Commissioner Noonan said, and added if they are as good good as they are supposed to be, and are proven so under tests of two or three years, it may be the "cotton road" will supplant the gravel road in this State."

# RUST COTTON PICKER STIRS PROS AND CONS

## Few in Memphis Dismiss Machine as Valueless

## SOME THINK IMPRACTICAL

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# 'MECHANICAL LINT' SAID LOWER GRADE

### *Green Leaf Causes Devaluation; Hand-Picked Cotton Classed Higher.*

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 4.—(AP)—Cotton classers along Front Street—Memphis' cotton row—estimated today samples ginned from seed cotton picked by a mechanical picker at Stoneville, Miss., Monday would be a grade to a grade and a half lower than the same cotton, if hand-picked.

W. A. Clemmons, vice president of the company handling the mechanical picker invented by John and Mack Rust, brought the samples here after they were ginned at Stoneville without a cleaner.

Classers said the staple was not damaged. The lower grade was caused by the amount of green leaf left in the machine-picked cotton after ginning without a cleaner.

The cotton was graded as low middling, very bright, which classers said would bring a better price than low middling, but not as good as strict low middling.

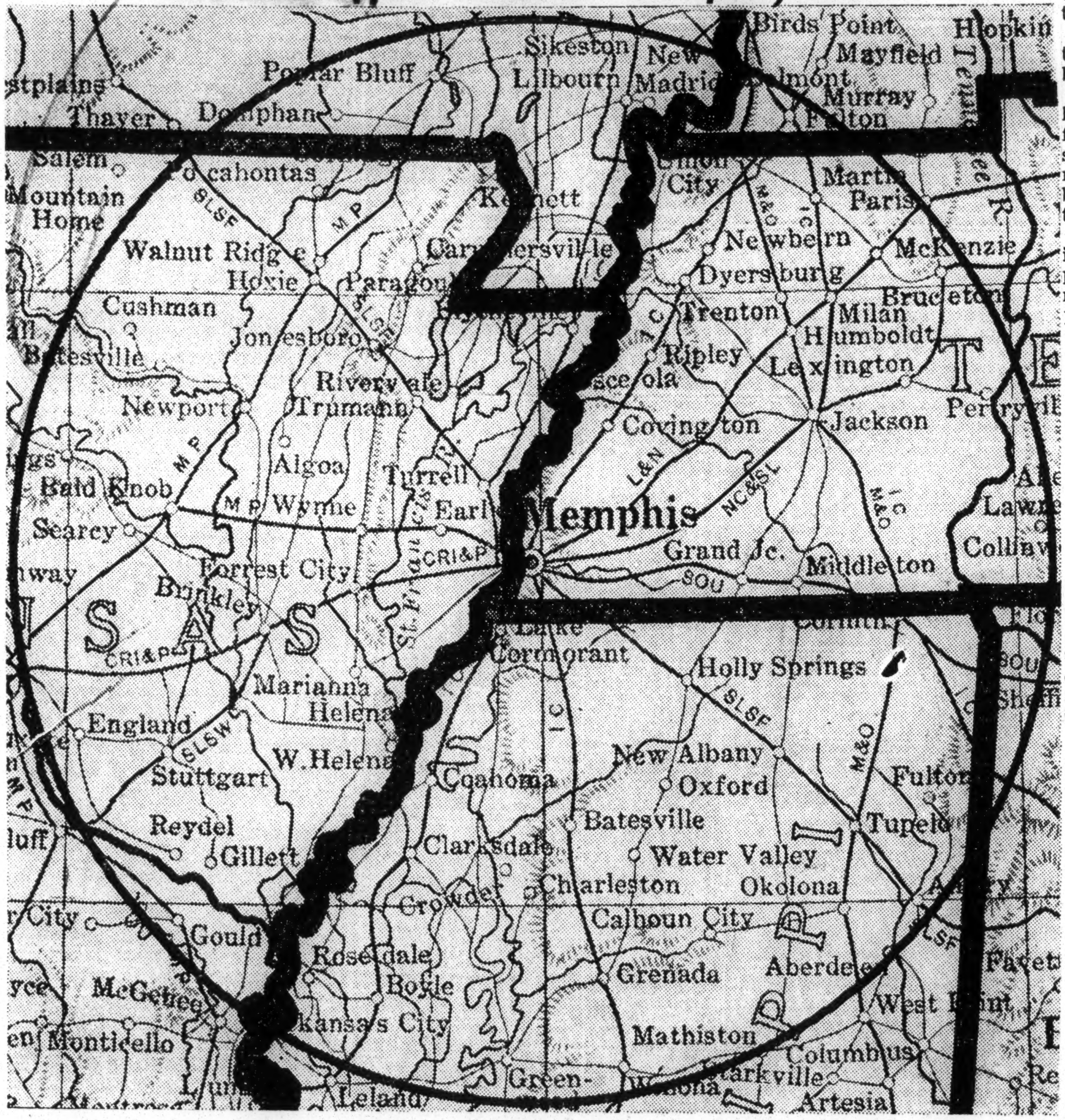
Clemmons said Robert Amacker, Lake Providence, La., graded the samples as strict low middling, extra white, estimating the grade off from $3 to $5 a bale from hand-picked cotton.

Government tests of the machine's picking efficiency compared to hand picking, and the quality of the cotton to determine its commercial value are under way at Stoneville.

Mack Rust is adding a back guard to the machine to catch much of the cotton dropped in the demonstration.

# Freight-Free Cotton In This Area

Commercial Appeal 9-22-36 Memphis, Tenn.




Farmers living within the encircled area of this map may ship cotton to Memphis for sale without paying freight costs provided it is sold to a member of the Memphis Cotton Exchange. The area has a radius of 125 miles.

Under the new method, the cotton can be shipped to Memphis collect. The freight bill will be charged to the account of the buyer.

The ruling does not apply to cotton shipped to Memphis by truck, boat or bus.

Heretofore, the inbound freight has been paid by the producer or for his account by his Memphis selling agent. This inbound freight ranges from 40 cents to $1.10 per bale, according to the railroad tariff.

Memphis railroads have heartily indorsed the new rule because it promises to materially increase the rail movement of cotton into Memphis.

# Free Shipments Plan To Help Cotton Growers In Six States

Commercial Appeal 9-22-36

Six states will benefit from an inbound freight arrangement allowing farmers within 125 miles of Memphis to ship cotton this year by rail without cost, if handled by members of the Memphis Cotton Exchange.

A great Mid-South circle, the area includes portions of Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, Missouri and Kentucky.

Dipping deep into Mississippi, the circle includes such centers as Greenwood, Winona, Starkville, Aberdeen and Amory, but misses Greenville, West Point and Columbus on its southern fringe.

Little Rock fell outside the circle by only seven miles and will not receive the freight benefit. Batesville, Heber Springs, England and Arkansas City are on the inner side of the rim.

Poplar Bluff, Sikeston, Caruthersville, New Madrid and other Southeast Missouri centers are included. Swinging into the tip of Kentucky, the area embraces Fulton, but skips Murray and Mayfield.

The Tennessee swath takes in Paris, Perryville, McKenzie and Collinwood on its border after including practically all of West Tennessee.

The arc slices through Alabama, taking a small portion of the northwest section, but omitting Sheffield and Florence.

The new ruling enables shippers to save thousands of dollars. Under the arrangement, Memphis merchants or buyers absorb all rail freight charges from point of origin on cotton stores in Memphis and West Memphis and purchased by them through members of the Memphis Cotton Exchange.

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"Ef'n It Doose Mah Wuk—Whose Wuk I Gwine Do?"

# Cotton Picker

—— BY GEORGE MORRIS ——

Whatever else you may say about a mechanical cotton picker, it cannot be claimed that it can be made to succeed or destroyed by editorial commendation or skepticism. It cannot be built up by publicity. If it works it works, and if it doesn't it doesn't, and that is all there is to it. Furthermore, there is a possibility that it may eventually be a success and an equally strong possibility that it never will.

Men have attempted to supplant physical labor by mechanical device for gathering cotton many years. More than one machine has been proclaimed a success and passed on to the fate from which many inventions never return. Cyrus McCormick, it will be recalled, revolutionized wheat growing by inventing a reaper, but it reaped from the beginning. The principles were never discarded but were improved on from year to year. Fundamentally the reaper today is what McCormick gave to the world on his Virginia farm in the beginning. That is true of many other inventions, and while the problem of an economically sound cotton picker has challenged genius from the time cotton was first grown in quantity, it seems far removed from perfection.

There is no intention to minimize the intelligence and resourcefulness the Rust brothers have applied to their machines. Undoubtedly they have gone further and accomplished more than any of their predecessors. They have proved that their machine will pick cotton. But that is not the whole solution. Other machines have done that. Not only have they advanced to the extent that no one would risk venturing the prediction that cotton cannot be gathered economically by a mechanical device, but they have created a difference of opinion among those who witnessed its operation as to its efficacy. One farmer says he would not have it if it were given to him and another says he would like to buy one right now. Another adds that it works better than the first automobile, which might suggest ultimate practicability. The first automobile was not practical and neither was any other automobile until highways were paved.

It must be considered that the first demonstration at Stoneville, Miss., was under ideal conditions. Conditions for gathering a cotton crop are usually far from ideal. The cotton crop this year is practically ready to be gathered on account of the drouth, heat and other conditions that brought practically all the bolls on the stalk to simultaneous maturity. A mechanical cotton picker that does not operate successfully under all conditions is not practical. The real test is under adverse conditions.

It is stated that it costs $2 a bale to operate the mechanical picker as against $7.50 to $10 a bale to gather it by hand. It is stated that the dust and trash gathered by the mechanical picker reduces the price of the staple by about two cents a pound, or the equivalent of $10 a bale. The result is that the saving is more than offset, even assuming that cotton pickers are paid to gather the crop. As a matter of fact a family can gather as much cotton as it can plant, plow, hoe and otherwise cultivate. The quantity of waste has not been determined.

The experts decline to venture an opinion until after the cotton gathered by the picker has passed through the gin and is compared with hand-picked cotton gathered from a similar field. Apparently the mechanical picker has introduced an entirely new problem. Hand-picked cotton, especially the second and third pickings, has many dry leaves mingled with the staple. There is scarcely any trash in the first picking, gathered before frost. The gin separates much of the cotton from the trash, but the staple from third and second pickings is not as good as the first. The mechanical picker mixes green leaves with the staple, something that has not been encountered before. It has yet to be determined to what extent green leaves will stain the cotton. In any event, it is apparent that the perfection of the cotton picker can hardly be anticipated until there has been some radical change in gin machinery to suit the changed condition of gathering the crop.

In some sections where cotton is produced on large ranches with little cultivation, it is gathered with unopened bolls, leaves and hulls. It is a low grade quality and the planter expects nothing else. In this territory a good deal of emphasis is laid upon the quality of the staple. Many farmers have observed the difference between the quality of cotton gathered by different pickers. The object is to keep the cotton as clear as possible from foreign substance and the care exercised is reflected in the grade and market price.

Undoubtedly the perfection of a mechanical cotton picker would have a vast influence upon southern agriculture, but it would not of necessity revolutionize the situation as some appear to believe. There will be plenty of work to do on the farm and if the tedious labor of gathering cotton by hand can be obviated it will contribute that much toward making life a little easier and take away a back-breaking and monotonous occupation.

9-2-36 Commercial Appeal Memphis Tenn.

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Commercial Appeal
Memphis, Tenn.

## *Mechanical Cotton Picker*

THE successful demonstration of the RUST Brothers' mechanical cotton picker at Stoneville, Miss. made certain a tremendous change in the economy of cotton growing. While the machine showed a few imperfections it is certain that these can be eliminated in the same manner that other labor saving machinery has been perfected.

The mechanical cotton picker is an object of great concern because if and when it is put to practical use it will displace some millions of hand laborers—men, women and children—who earn their living during the cotton planting, cultivating and harvesting season, from the first of March to the end of October, depending upon the section of the South in which the seasonal work takes place. For the large majority of cotton share-croppers and tenants it means a living for the year-round, of course.

According to RUPERT B. VANCE, author of *Human Geography of the South*, there are 1,790,783 tenant families in the cotton belt. Of these 1,091,944 are white, and 698,839 are colored. The white families are larger than the colored, according to Mr. VANCE, and the total number of individuals in these tenant families runs to approximately five and a half million whites and slightly over three million Negroes.

As all of these people will be affected eventually the South may look forward to the displacement of eight and one half million people of the tenant class. And as the small independent farmers, of whom there are a few million, white and colored left, will also be affected in time by the competition of the cheaper mechanized production which only a few cotton barons can afford, the South is looking a calamitous situation in the face.

There is no doubt that this problem is worrying the South, but the thing is inevitable from the standpoint of the progress of invention, and it is probably good for the South to have something to afford the section a distraction from the lingering obsessions of a slave-holding-feudal system, to such conditions as those that produced such contemporary literature as *Tobacco Road* and *Ninety in the Shade*.

What the BANKHEAD New Deal cotton reduction law did not do toward completely impoverishing the South's tenant population remains for the RUST Brothers' machine to finish.

Somehow we feel that it is a good thing that this mechanical cotton picker is about ready to take its place among other inventions that have wrought great social and economic changes. The South has never really faced seriously a vast social problem. To philanthropy was left the largest part of Negro education and training for citizenship when the four million slaves were emancipated. The South permitted a philanthropic Jew to bear one-third of the cost of five thousand Negro school houses while the impoverished Negroes voluntarily taxed themselves for one-third, as the other third came tediously from public funds.

The South has been very parsimonious with its poor whites, especially those that have been mercilessly exploited by the textile industry, while more than a million families of them have been gradually slipping back from the status of farm owners to hopeless farm tenants.

It begins to look like the advantaged South will have to come to grips with a real social problem, with all of its economic implications. Ten million additional idle people, two-thirds of whom are white, are too many for the police to handle.

**CHANGES IN COTTON ECONOMY**

With the Rust brothers' cotton picker going through final tests a lively discussion is taking place over the economic and social effects that can be expected if it proves to be the success it is claimed to be.

It is freely predicted that if the picker is successful the center of cotton production will move West and be concentrated in Texas, Oklahoma and the Mississippi Delta. Commenting on the opinion that the Southeast, comprising the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama "will be sunk", Dr. Clarence Poe, editor of The Progressive Farmer, says:

"There are two ways by which such a cotton picker could be made available to 'the little man.' First, by cooperative ownership. Second, by having some well-to-do man in each neighborhood own a picker and do cotton picking for his neighbors for cash or for toil in much the same way that grain threshing has always been done.

"But the Southeast has two major money crops—cotton and tobacco—in addition to numerous other sources of farm income. If cotton had never been grown in America there would no doubt be a relatively prosperous agriculture in the Southeast anyhow. Our ability to grow cotton and tobacco has simply kept us from doing as well as we might with other farm products.

"Our nearness to great Eastern markets gives our truckers and fruit growers an advantage over those in other sections. Our mountain sections can produce better apples than Oregon—and more profitable ones if we only learn how to grade and standardize them. And all too many people when they discuss Southern agriculture utterly leave out the crop which utilizes more acres than all other crops combined—our timber crop."

It is well that the social and economic implications of potential changes in cotton culture are being debated in advance of the actual changes. The Rust brothers have expressed a desire to guard against their machine creating too rapid changes. One prospect that has not been discussed frequently is that the machine may be utilized in foreign countries. While it is planned to rent rather than sell them in the United States, it is possible that the principles of the machine could be adapted by other countries that are already threatening the South's domniation of the cotton market.

If cotton can be raised profitably on large tracts at seven or eight cents a pound and if substitutes for some grades can be produced in the laboratory, the Southeast must prepare at some time in the future to abandon the major portion of its production and turn to other crops.

## Hail the Cotton Picker

Many of our best minds, including the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, are alarmed over the successful demonstration of a mechanical cotton picker in Mississippi.

They recognize that if the perfected machine is put to general use, probably 7,000,000 persons who make up the tenant farm families of the South will be out of work at cotton picking time.

Similar objections have been made to many a great invention designed to supplant manual labor with machinery. Opposition was raised to the cotton gin, the ditch digger, the cement mixer, shoe making machine, electric and air drills and even bookkeeping machines.

Opposition in every case merely delayed the general employment of such time-saving appliances and these, as well as many others, are well nigh indispensable today.

Instead of mourning over the arrival of a mechanical cotton picker we ought to rejoice that each machine put into use will relieve seventy-five men of this back-breaking labor which pays but 50 cents a day to laborers who are kept in peonage and in ignorance in the cotton areas of the South.

There may be temporary suffering of tenant farmers against which an enlightened Federal government should be prepared to deal.

But, eventually, it must emancipate the cotton pickers just as machinery has freed the laborers of the grain belt; and Dixie's surplus labor must be provided jobs in other States where there is a public school, a ballot and a higher wage.

John Henry, the champion railroad spike driver, is only a myth today. Maybe the new machine means the end of Sam Jones, the champion cotton picker. If so, we have no regrets.

## *COTTON BASES ROAD*

### *400 Miles Completed With Fabric Reinforcement.*

NEW YORK, Sept. 26—(P)—More than 400 miles of cotton re-inforced bituminous surfaced roads will have been completed within three months, state highways departments have notified the Cotton Textile Institute.

Completion of the roads, the institute pointed out, will demonsartte the practicability of the use of cotton fabric as a reinforcing membrane between the top surface and the base.

The Department of Agriculture was allocated $1,300,000 to finance a nation-wide demonstration of the new construction method, which was expected to open a new market for cotton as each mile of road uses from eight to ten bales.

Cotton roads have been completed or are under construction in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Alabama, Indiana, Virginia, Missouri, Arkansas and Tennessee.

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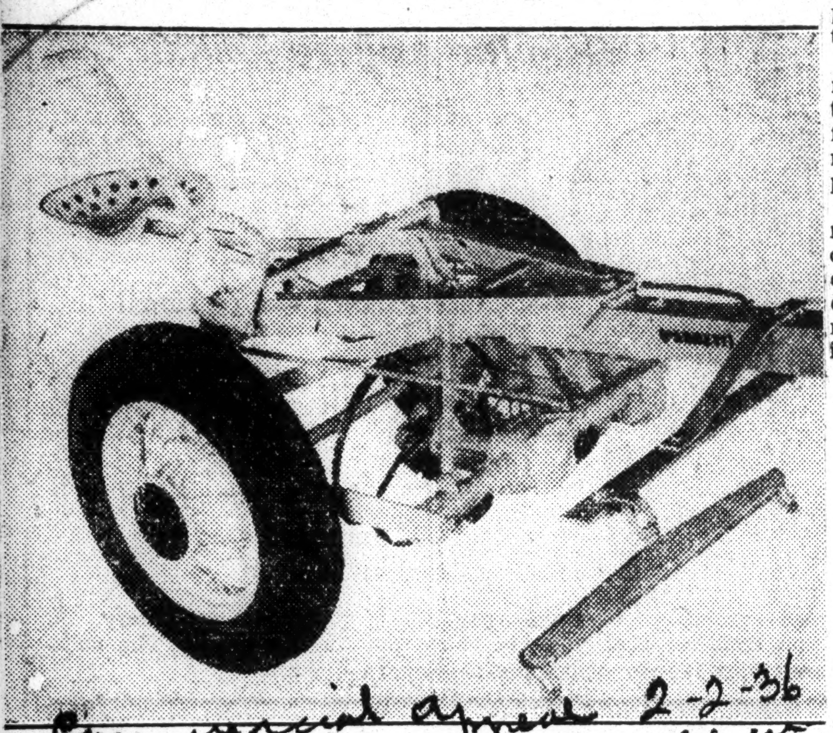
General.

# Sit Down to Drop Cotton



Commercial Appeal 2-2-36
Memphis, Tenn.

Called "the hoe with a seat," this new mechanical cotton chopper was exhibited by its makers recently at the annual convention of the Texas Hardware and Implement Association in Dallas.

# COTTON-HOEING DEVICE EXHIBITED AT DALLAS

## Makers Claim Machine Does Accurate Work as Chopper

## "IT PLOWS AS IT CHOPS"

### Labor-Saving Apparatus Creates Much Comment Among Farmers of Southwest—Easy to Operate

Commercial Appeal

Special to The Commercial Appeal

DALLAS, Texas, Feb. 1—With the Rust Brothers of Memphis already preparing to market a mechanical picker, the movement toward mechanization of southern farming took a new turn last week with the exhibition here of a man-made cotton chopper.

2-2-36

The Dixie Cotton Chopper, as it is called, was placed on display by the Dixie Cultivator Corporation of Dallas at the Texas Hardware and Implement Association's annual convention here.

Memphis!

It is the invention of Dent Parrett, who built tractors for the Allied armies during the World War and has designed tractors for some of the largest companies in the United States. Mr. Parrett is president of the corporation which is making the new device.

**"Hoe With Seat"**

Mr. Parrett calls his machine "the hoe with the seat on it," stating that this was the exclamation of an old negro who saw the device for the first time. He says it can be manipulated with ease "even by a girl" and that "it plows as it chops, and it follows the row, leaving one and two stalks the same as the hoe." It is suitable for any soil, does not get entangled with trash, and is self-cleaning, its makers claim.

The machine created much talk here because spring and summer cotton chopping has always been done at a slow pace by farm labor using the hoe. Busiest periods for the farm worker are the planting, the chopping and the harvesting season.

## Cotton Picker To Be On Market in 1937

The Rust Brothers mechanical cotton picker will not be ready for the market in time for the 1936 season, according to its makers here, John and Mack Rust, but from eight to 10 of the harvesters will be placed in fields near Memphis at that time.

"We hope to have our machines ready for the general market in time for the harvest season of the following year," the Rusts announced in The Commercial Appeal's Trade News Review last week.

There was little comment here on reports regarding the mechanical cotton chopper shown in Dallas recently, farmers and others interested preferring to withhold comment until they had seen the device in action.

Opelousas, La. News
April 9, 1936

# Cattle Advocated To Replace Cotton As Southern Staple

Tuskegee Institute, Ala., — A new era for the South, in which cattle raising will succeed cotton and become the chief means of livelihood, is foreseen by Dr. George W. Carver, agricultural recsearch expert of Tuskagee Institute.

To that end, Dr. Carver is studying the capacity of Alabama and southern sons to grow feeds that will make cattle profitable. He points out three important facters, which he expects will bring about this change, as follows:

**Outside Competition**

1. Growth of foreign cotton crops with cheaper labor than is used in the production of Dixie's staple, will reach serious proportions in a few years, reducing demand for American cotton in the world's markets.

2. Limitation of acreage and production, under the AAA regulations has already made it necessary for southern farmers to seek other methods of adding to a limited income from cotton-raising, especially from feeds and foodstuffs.

3. Natural advantages of soil, climate and water make production of feeds and appropriation of land for pasture economical in Alabama and throughout most of the South.

**Cattle Mean Fertility**

Dr. Carver points out that this change from a cotton-growing to stock-raising South would mean richer South, because "you never saw a rich agricultural section without lost of stock. Cattle is synonymous with fertility of soil, and fertile farms not only have a higher value than soils devoted to one crop, but produce bigger crops."

"The growth of cattle in big numbers will attract more packing plants, and also enable those already in the South to run full time, instead of part time. More packing plants would mean more pay rolls for the South."

# Farm Credit Helps Many

## Prof. H. A. Hunt Is Directing Policies

## OF THAT BUREAU

## Which Has Formed Many Thrift Associations

PROF. HUNT

Washington, D. C., June 8. (ANP) —It was learned this week through officials of the Federal Credit Administration that as a result of reports coming from Negro county extension agents and teachers of vocational agriculture throughout the country, particularly the South, thousands of colored applicants are receiving Farm Credit Administration loans from the Federal land banks, the productions credit associations and the emergency crop loan offices, and that these loans are being repaid by the farmers without trouble and without delay.

The added information that the Negroes who give security are among the best risks in the country, was also corroborated through these same sources. Cooperative and thrift associations among Negro farmers, called Federal Credit Unions and supervised by the Federal Credit Administration, have been organized in both North and South, to encourage the saving of money, and to make loans to each other at a reasonable rate of interest. Inquires on the government's farm credit program should be directed to H. A. Hunt, assistant to the governor, Farm Credit Administration, Washington, D. C.

# COTTON ROAD BASE IN PRACTICAL STAGE

Commercial Appeal 5-13-36
Memphis, Tenn.

## Conference Hears Speaker Indorse Use

## STATES BUILD 565 MILES

### Market of 400,000 Bales Each Year Estimated as Result of Proposed Use in Construction of Highways

BY DANIEL L. WELLS
Special Correspondent to The Commercial Appeal

DETROIT, Mich., May 12.—The use of cotton in road building, with a potential market of 400,000 bales of cotton a year, has already reached the practical stage, Howard E. Coffin, chairman of the Southwestern Cottons, Inc., said tonight in an address before the Second Dearborn Conference.

"The federal government is spending $1,300,000 to demonstrate the practicility of cotton goods, and 19 states have contracted to build 565 miles of cotton roads this summer," Coffin said.

**Plan Experiments**

"Tennessee, Mississippi, Indiana, Illinois, North and South Carolina are among these states. Each state will build a short sketch ofthe new type of road and will use it as an experiment to determine its endurance.

"The cotton is used to reinforce soft-surfaced roads, which do not take the place of concrete roads.

"But 45,000 miles of soft-surfaced roads are resurfaced every year," Coffin said. "Every mile of this can be done with cotton, and a mile of cotton reinforced road takes from eigh to 10 bales of cotton.

This makes a potential market of more than 400,000 bales a year."

Coffin, formerly chairman of the board of the Hudson Motor Car Company, spoke at the first evening session of the Second Dearborn Conference. Sponsored by the Farm Chemurgic Council, the Chemical Foundation and Henry Ford, the conference has been called to find new uses for the products of America's farms, by bringing to the aid of agriculture allthe resources of industry and science.

The conference opened Tuesday noon, and is to close Thrusday night. Nearly 1,000 persons, representing science and industry as well as farm communities, are attending the three-day session, which is being held at the Book Cadillac Hotel, in downtown Detroit, instead of the smaller Dearborn Inn, as originally scheduled. The change was necessitated by the large number of delegates.

### Seek New Outlet

All speakers today pointed out the necessity for agriculture to find new outlets for its produce if it is to regain any measure of prosperity. They all believe that these new outlets could only be found through advances in science which daily is developing new products for industry to manufacture from the farm's raw materials.

The speakers for the conference and the council's governing board, were welcomed at a luncheon in the Dearborn Inn this noon. Henry Ford attended the luncheon, but made no speech. William J. Cameron, his spokesman, said to the members of the council:

"You must be on the right track because the professional saviors of the farm have paid no attention to you."

Francis P. Garvan, president of the Council and Chemical Foundation, replied to Cameron's speech, briefly.

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Down to the year 1824 in England the Act of Queen Elizabeth was in force by which the acceptance of whatever wages was given workmen was compulsory, the workers' wages definitely fixed, and even the mere combination of workmen absolutely illegal.

## SOUTHERN PAPER MILLS

When the experiments of Dr. Charles Herty led to the announcement that a high grade of print paper could be made from southern slash pine at a lower cost than from northern spruce, it was anticipated that this would quickly lead to the establishment of large pulp mills and plants to manufacture newsprint.

Up to the present such projects have not developed to the point where they can be announced as definite, but that has not retarded manufacturers taking advantage of the fact that there is a huge quantity of raw material for the manufacture of kraft paper, liner board and other articles of commerce.

At present three large plants are under construction, some nearing completion. The Union Bag & Paper Company's plant at Savannah represents an investment of $4,000,000; that of the Crossett Lumber Company at Crossett, Ark., $4,000,000, and the Champion Paper & Fiber Company at Houston, Texas, $3,500,000.

Three proposed mills for which plans and specifications are now being prepared, are West Virginia Pulp & Paper Mill Company at Charleston, S. C., $5,000,000; St. Joe Paper Company at Port St. Joe, Fla., $7,500,000, and the Container Company of America at Fernandina, Fla., $5,500,000.

These six industries represent a total investment of $29,500,000, and are designed for an estimated production of 1,250 tons of pulp, kraft and liner board from southern slash pine, and will provide employment directly in the plants and in the woods in cutting and transporting pulpwood for 7,500 persons. This will represent a combined pay roll of approximately $7,500,000.

The large sum of new money that will be thus released in the south does not take into account the amount that will be paid to farmers who raise slash pine for sale to the various companies for cash. The projects open up a vast possibility for a future farm crop that will need little attention after the first plantings, and will take care of large acreages of marginal land not fit for crop cultivation.

Establishment of pulp and paper mills for the manufacture of newsprint, while still a matter of the future, is sure to come. The United States now spends $175,000,000 a year for newsprint and pulp, most of which goes to Canada and other foreign countries. A large part of this huge sum will come into the south, providing employment for labor and a cash crop for southern farmers.

# PEASANTRY THREAT SEEN BY DR. ODUM

### Quick Readjustment In Tenant System Primary Need, Educator Asserts

UNIVERSITY, ALA., June 26.—(AP)—Dr. H. W. Odum, of the University of North Carolina, said here today there was "threatened peasantry" for the American farmer if farm mortgages and farm tenancy continued on an increased trend.

The speaker, whose address closed the annual Institute of State and Local Affairs at the University of Alabama, said farm mortgages amounted to $8,000,000,000 and that there were 2,800,000 tenant farmers in America. He urged "readjustments that will reconstruct the present tenant system."

"There is no demonstrable way of remedying this situation," Dr. Odum said "without the combined research and counsel of those who plan together for the better ordering of our commonwealth even as did the earlier settlers.

"The planning of a richer farm life and agrarian culture through the improvement of lands, the increase of value, the diversification of crops and opportunities, the economic profitableness of farming, the cultural attractiveness of country life are all inseparably related to the wise distribution of population and the enrichment of their culture. . . . .

"It is everywhere apparent that cotton in the future will play an increasingly smaller role in the total economy, thus necessitating a fundamental reconstruction of agriculture in the whole region. The worst thing that could happen to the South would be to plunge it back into an orgy of cotton production."

Problems for immediate adjustment, he said, include the following:

New provisions for an adequate credit system.

Some readjustment and redistribution of the present crop land uses, with some new crop and a very large increase in ratio of food and feed crops.

Some immediate methods of raising the standard of consumption of commodities by the Southern people, both in the rural areas and in other cities.

Some arrangement whereby international exchange and trade may be promoted.

An economy which will enable the farmer to spend his cash money for needed goods rather than for commercial fertilizer and food and feed crops supplies.

"If the Southern regions could devote a fourth of the technology and work to their agricultural problems that has been developed in the Far Western regions, they would become literal garden spots of the world," he said. "Yet this can be done only through a well motivated coordinated planning program."

Bristol, Va., Herald-Courier
March 17, 1936

# FARM OWNERSHIP FOR NEGROES ADVOCATED

ATLANTA, March 16. (AP)—Extension of farm ownership to Negroes to afford them "greater participation in community affairs" was asked today by the Commission of Interracial Cooperation, which described lynching as "primarily a technique of enforcing racial exploitation."

The commission described the Negro's lot as "slavery, peonage, low wages, restricted work opportunities and inferior educational and other public welfare facilities."

The report, issues under the title of "The Mob Rides On," said 41 per cent of the 84 persons lynched in the last five years were accused of petty crimes or "no crimes whatever." Most of the victims were Negroes.

"The exploitation of the Negro extends from its broad economic base into all the vital phases of political life," the report, issued by R. B. Eleazer, secretary of the commission, said.

## *New Uses for Cotton*

The North Carolina State College, in conjunction with federal technologists, has succeeded in developing a cotton bag in which to pack raw sugar and a series of tests will be put into effect in carrying the sugar from Hawaii to the refineries in California.

Raw sugar is now packed in bags made of jute, which comes from India and in spite of the agitation of the question for many years we have not been able to make much headway in the interest of the cotton farmers of the South by substituting cotton bags for jute.

The bags to be used to carry sugar from Hawaii to California will call for something like 10 thousands bales of cotton and if all the raw sugar entering the United States were carried in cotton bags there would be a demand for 50 thousand additional bales of cotton.

It is admitted that cotton bags are more expensive than jute, but severe and extended tests have revealed that they last longer than the container made from the material imported from half way around the world.

A special machine has been devised for testing the "drop strength" of various kinds of bags. It was found in a series of experiments that the cotton bag could be dropped 1,700 times before it broke, while a jute bag could be dropped only 185 jolts. It is explained that if the cotton bag can be used only three times it will be actually cheaper than the jute bag, and yet the experiments, as we have seen, show that the cotton bag is almost ten times more durable than jute.

This experiment and the indication that cotton bags are really more economical, in the long run than jute bags should have far-reaching effect. There are thousands of uses to which the cotton bag could be put in the place of jute and the tests would seem to show that the cotton bag is really one-third cheaper than jute.

It is scientific research like this, seeking out new uses for such material as we have which make ridiculous all claims that there can be any such thing as over-production. Here we have been going along all these years simply arguing for the use of cotton instead of jute. We have placed the argument almost entirely on the ground that it is a patriotic duty to do this in order to increase the demand for the chief staple of the South.

Then along comes the scientist with his drop test and shows that it would be to the selfish interest of all concerned to use cotton in place of jute.

Shifting from jute to cotton as containers for raw sugar is only one new field. Much has already been said of the use of cotton mesh as a covering for highways and the laboratory experts have just started. The time may come when he will find a demand for all our cotton on the present basis of production right here at home, and at the same time there is no reason why we should not continue to fight for our foreign markets.

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Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of

General

# Cotton's Continued Supremacy

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## Cook Urges Support Of Quest For New Uses

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## Up To Science, Rotarians Told

IF THE South expects to maintain a vast economic wealth from its chief agricultural product, cotton, G. Arthur Cook, executive of the West Boylston Manufacturing Company, yesterday told the Rotary Club that it must give support to those scientific groups which are seeking to find new and extensive uses for the staple.

Mr. Cook cited figures showing that while nearly one-fifth of the farm land of the nation was devoted, directly or indirectly, to cotton, there had been a marked decline in per capita consumption; that foreign nations with "nationalistic complexes" were attempting to raise their own cotton; that tariff barriers still restricted trade from overseas, and that innumerable substitutes had begun to decrease the normal demand for cotton.

He said the use of substitutes, such as rayon, were serious menaces to the cotton trade and that, even if foreign commerce should be restored to a considerable extent, this factor would continue to be an outstanding problem.

Mr. Cook told of the recent development of cotton fibre for use in highway construction, but added that this "stopped at the scientific point," and would, most likely, be but a "drop in the bucket" towards creating a steady and appreciable demand.

"As in some other field of industry, like the automotive trade, we must provide the means for highly trained scientists and technicians to go into their laboratories and find new ways of using cotton. They must, and can, find sources for consumption—products that will find everyday uses in the home, factory, or elsewhere."

Mr. Cook told of the Cotton Foundation, at Memphis, where it was hoped to bring about such results. The organization, he said, was to be non-political and without profit, and to be supported, perhaps, by small assessments upon cotton and cotton products. The uses of the latter, he said, were almost of equal importance to the staple, itself.

"It is time for the South to be up and doing," he concluded, "if the cotton market is to maintain its high position. Other industries already have gone forward in scientific research, and have found sources of great wealth in hitherto useless products or by-products. The same can be done for cotton, and the first step must be taken by the cotton-growing South."

### THE SOUTH'S RESPONSIBILITY

The need for concerted scientific research as the salvation of the South's cotton is again stressed by the address of G. Arthur Cook, executive of the West Boylston Manufacturing Company, to the Rotary Club.

Mr. Cook outlined the purpose of the Cotton Foundation, the chief objective of which is to establish research laboratories devoted to discovering new uses for cotton and cotton products.

As he says, "the first step must be taken by the cotton-growing South." The South must take this step, else it will wake up some day to find itself helpless in the face of accumulated handicaps.

## Jerusalem Artichoke Has Fine Opportunity As Southern Product

Editor Constitution: In a recent editorial you stated that a demand had been built up for the Jerusalem artichoke in New York. The artichoke that is popular in New York is the California Burr artichoke.

Several years ago a firm in Dallas, Texas, went broke trying to sell artichokes over the United States on a large scale. We feel, like you do, that something should be done to develop this vegetable but it is going to take a lot of hard work and money to do it.

W. G. MERRIN,
Merrin-Cravens Company.
Atlanta, Aug. 6.

### THE ARTICHOKE

In a communication elsewhere on this page, W. G. Merim, prominent Atlanta produce broker, states that it is the California burr artichoke, and not the Jerusalem artichoke, that is popular in New York markets.

There are two distinct varieties of the artichoke. The true plant bearing this name is a native of the Mediterranean region, and in different localities is known as the Italian, French, burr and globe; being cultivated in the United States, principally in California, it is sometimes given the name of that state.

The Jerusalem artichoke is said to be a native of Brazil. It is a perennial sunflower-like herb, growing five to twelve feet tall, with rough leaves four to eight inches long and many yellow terminal flower heads often two to three inches in diameter. The edible pear-shaped purplish, red, white or yellow tubers, for which the plant is cultivated, are numerous, seldom more than three inches in diameter, rather watery, but of pleasant flavor, and are used in diets which exclude sugar.

No vegetable is of easier cultivation. For home use the tubers are usually planted in well-drained soil in some out-of-the-way corner of the garden and allowed to take care of themselves from year to year, the few tubers and pieces of roots left in the ground after digging sufficing to restock the bed. In field culture the methods are like those practiced in raising potatoes, except that the tubers may be left in the ground over winter and dug when needed. They are not injured by frost if left in the ground, but if frozen after being dug they will spoil quickly, like a potato. The usual yield is from 250 to 500 bushels per acre.

In Europe the Jerusalem artichoke tubers are used in the manufacture of alcohol. In this country that use is being investigated for commercial purposes. The tubers make good stock and poultry feed, and the tough fiber of the stalks is being utilized in making cordage and other materials of commerce. In some sections the stalks are dried and used as fuel.

In the Jerusalem artichoke southern farmers have a crop that is grown in a small way all through this section; its great adaptability and ease of production should warrant every farmer having a plot devoted to its cultivation, for home use at first, but later as a commercial cash crop as the use of the tubers increase for the dinner table, for stock food, and to produce a low-cost base for alcohol. Utilization of the stalks will be made of real commercial value as the quantity of these increases.

A good sale of these tubers, as their value as potato substitute becomes better known, should be assured.

**WILMINGTON, CAL. PRESS**

JUL 22 1936

### THE COTTON-PICKING MACHINE

With all the advantages for making the highest efficiency to the grower, now comes the cotton-picking machine! While this is not the best for the laborer, yet it shows the advancement in caring for this high-cultured product so necessary to humanity. Over in Arizona a cotton-picking machine has been invented, though it seriously threatens the present order in the American south's cotton fields. This machine travels along the cotton row, doing marvelous work. While the Negro hands pick 30 pounds each the machine picks the stems cleanly of 600 pounds, and the cotton is as clean as that in the hand-picked bags.

The cost of the machine picking is $1 an acre or one-fifth the cost of hand labor. This machine is no mere godsend for the old south, where it could do the work of 2,000,000 Negroes, who have no other livelihood. These are vital problems that concern working men, and does not show a favorable condition for the federal government in trying to care for the millions idle today.

**SYRACUSE, N. Y. POST STANDARD**

NOV 22 1935

### New Cotton Picker Passes Tests

First field tests of the new Rust brothers cotton-picking machine indicate that it may prove as revolutionary an instrument in a great agricultural industry as Eli Whitney's cotton gin.

Put to work on a field of irrigated cotton in Arizona, the machine picked about 600 pounds of cotton, stripping the stalks clean and keeping the cotton clean. The cost was estimated at approximately $1 an acre. The time taken was three hours.

The average field hand would pick about 30 pounds during the same time. Each machine, accordingly, would displace 20 workers. And it is estimated the cost would be about one-fifth that of hand picking.

So the ghost of technological employment lifts its fearful head in the south. What will happen if machine pickers multiply and displace 2,000,000 Negroes now sustained by cotton picking? What will happen to the little grower who produced only a bale or two of cotton a year, in competition with the producer of many acres using mechanical and cheaper means of gleaning his crop?

They are questions of more than a little importance. And there is just one answer to them. Consumption of goods of the south must be increased to the end that there is a steady demand for the labor of these men and women, whether it be for cotton or for other goods. That is why far-sighted leaders in the southern states are demanding insistently a program that will restore export markets to the south.

General

Agriculture - 1936 & Improvement of

# Cotton's Continued Supremacy

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## Cook Urges Support Of Quest For New Uses

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## Up To Science, Rotarians Told

IF THE South expects to maintain a vast economic wealth from its chief agricultural product, cotton, G. Arthur Cook, executive of the West Boylston Manufacturing Company, yesterday told the Rotary Club that it must give support to those scientific groups which are seeking to find new and extensive uses for the staple.

Mr. Cook cited figures showing that while nearly one-fifth of the farm land of the nation was devoted directly or indirectly, to cotton, there had been a marked decline in per capita consumption; that foreign nations with "nationalistic complexes" were attempting to raise their own cotton; that tariff barriers still restricted trade from overseas, and that innumerable substitutes had begun to decrease the normal demand for cotton.

He said the use of substitutes, such as rayon, were serious menaces to the cotton trade and that, even if foreign commerce should be restored to a considerable extent, this factor would continue to be an outstanding problem.

Mr. Cook told of the recent development of cotton fibre for use in highway construction, but added that this "stopped at the scientific point," and would, most likely be but a "drop in the bucket" towards creating a steady and appreciable demand.

"As in some other field of industry, like the automotive trade, we must provide the means for highly trained scientists and technicians to go into their laboratories and find new ways of using cotton. They must, and can, find sources for consumption—products that will find everyday uses in the home, factory, or elsewhere."

Mr. Cook told of the Cotton Foundation, at Memphis, where it was hoped to bring about such results. The organization, he said, was to be non-political and without profit, and to be supported, perhaps, by small assessments upon cotton and cotton products. The uses of the latter, he said, were almost of equal importance to the staple, itself.

"It is time for the South to be up and doing," he concluded, "if the cotton market is to maintain its high position. Other industries already have gone forward in scientific research, and have found sources of great wealth in hitherto useless products or by-products. The same can be done for cotton, and the first step must be taken by the cotton-growing South."

### THE SOUTH'S RESPONSIBILITY

The need for concerted scientific research as the salvation of the South's cotton is again stressed by the address of G. Arthur Cook, executive of the West Boylston Manufacturing Company, to the Rotary Club.

Mr. Cook outlined the purpose of the Cotton Foundation, the chief objective of which is to establish research laboratories devoted to discovering new uses for cotton and cotton products.

As he says, "the first step must be taken by the cotton-growing South." The South must take this step, else it will wake up some day to find itself helpless in the face of accumulated handicaps.

## Jerusalem Artichoke Has Fine Opportunity As Southern Product

Editor Constitution: In a recent editorial you stated that a demand had been built up for the Jerusalem artichoke in New York. The artichoke that is popular in New York is the California Burr artichoke.

Several years ago a firm in Dallas, Texas, went broke trying to sell artichokes over the United States on a large scale. We feel, like you do, that something should be done to develop this vegetable but it is going to take a lot of hard work and money to do it.

W. G. MERRIN,
Merrin-Cravens Company.

Atlanta, Aug. 6.

### THE ARTICHOKE

In a communication elsewhere on this page, W. G. Merim, prominent Atlanta produce broker, states that it is the California burr artichoke, and not the Jerusalem artichoke, that is popular in New York markets.

There are two distinct varieties of the artichoke. The true plant bearing this name is a native of the Mediterranean region, and in different localities is known as the Italian, French, burr and globe; being cultivated in the United States, principally in California, it is sometimes given the name of that state.

The Jerusalem artichoke is said to be a native of Brazil. It is a perennial sunflower-like herb, growing five to twelve feet tall, with rough leaves four to eight inches long and many yellow terminal flower heads often two to three inches in diameter. The edible pear-shaped purplish, red, white or yellow tubers, for which the plant is cultivated, are numerous, seldom more than three inches in diameter, rather watery, but of pleasant flavor, and are used in diets which exclude sugar.

No vegetable is of easier cultivation. For home use the tubers are usually planted in well-drained soil in some out-of-the-way corner of the garden and allowed to take care of themselves from year to year, the few tubers and pieces of roots left in the ground after digging sufficing to restock the bed. In field culture the methods are like those practiced in raising potatoes, except that the tubers may be left in the ground over winter and dug when needed. They are not injured by frost if left in the ground, but if frozen after being dug they will spoil quickly, like a potato. The usual yield is from 250 to 500 bushels per acre.

In Europe the Jerusalem artichoke tubers are used in the manufacture of alcohol. In this country that use is being investigated for commercial purposes. The tubers make good stock and poultry feed, and the tough fiber of the stalks is being utilized in making cordage and other materials of commerce. In some sections the stalks are dried and used as fuel.

In the Jerusalem artichoke southern farmers have a crop that is grown in a small way all through this section; its great adaptability and ease of production should warrant every farmer having a plot devoted to its cultivation, for home use at first, but later as a commercial cash crop as the use of the tubers increase for the dinner table, for stock food, and to produce a low-cost base for alcohol. Utilization of the stalks will be made of real commercial value as the quantity of these increases.

A good sale of these tubers, as their value as potato substitute becomes better known, should be assured.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.
POST STANDARD
NOV 22 1935

## New Cotton Picker Passes Tests

First field tests of the new Rust brothers cotton-picking machine indicate that it may prove as revolutionary an instrument in a great agricultural industry as Eli Whitney's cotton gin.

Put to work on a field of irrigated cotton in Arizona, the machine picked about 600 pounds of cotton, stripping the stalks clean and keeping the cotton clean. The cost was estimated at approximately $1 an acre. The time taken was three hours.

The average field hand would pick about 30 pounds during the same time. Each machine, accordingly, would displace 20 workers. And it is estimated the cost would be about one-fifth that of hand picking.

So the ghost of technological employment lifts its fearful head in the south. What will happen if machine pickers multiply and displace 2,000,000 Negroes now sustained by cotton picking? What will happen to the little grower who produced only a bale or two of cotton a year, in competition with the producer of many acres using mechanical and cheaper means of gleaning his crop?

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WILMINGTON, CAL.
PRESS
JUL 22 1936

## THE COTTON-PICKING MACHINE

With all the advantages for making the highest efficiency to the grower, now comes the cotton-picking machine! While this is not the best for the laborer, yet it shows the advancement in caring for this high-cultured product so necessary to humanity. Over in Arizona a cotton-picking machine has been invented, though it seriously threatens the present order in the American south's cotton fields. This machine travels along the cotton row, doing marvelous work. While the Negro hands pick 30 pounds each the machine picks the stems cleanly of 600 pounds, and the cotton is as clean as that in the hand-picked bags.

The cost of the machine picking is $1 an acre or one-fifth the cost of hand labor. This machine is no mere godsend for the old south, where it could do the work of 2,000,000 Negroes, who have no other livelihood. These are vital problems that concern working men, and does not show a favorable condition for the federal government in trying to care for the millions idle today.

WASHINGTON, D. C.
NEWS

NOV 28 1935

# Destroying Labor

HERE are some of the latest "marvels" for the destruction of labor:

A new device which will do all the hand-picking of cotton with machines and thus destroy employment for 4,000,000 cotton pickers. Perhaps one thousand people will be employed to make these machines, but 4,000,000 poor Negroes may be added to the relief rolls.

It is going to open up the great cotton growing country of Arizona and New Mexico, where cotton can be grown cheaper and better, but what benefit will we get from cheaper cotton goods when people haven't any money with which to buy them because they have no jobs?

A new way of building ready-made "canned" homes in a factory so cheaply that everybody can own their own home, with little or no upkeep. But where are people going to earn money to buy these homes?

Chemistry is growing crops on trays in the kitchen, and raising sheep on synthetic food. The worshipers of science, invention, progress and civilization claim those thrown out of work find employment elsewhere. Where is this "elsewhere"?

Another name for this "elsewhere" is relief rolls. There are 11-500,000 suffering souls seeking jobs in this "elsewhere" today. There are 22 million hungry mouths searching for food in this "elsewhere" today. (From a letter written by Harry Calkins, public relations counsel for international labor unions, and Frank Finney, New York advertising man.)

ITHACA, N. Y.
JOURNAL

NOV 27 1935

## Cotton Picker Works

For years there have been efforts to construct a cotton picking machine. Until quite recently results were not satisfactory.

But when inventors and technicians set themselves to deal with some specific mechanical problem they are likely to solve it in the end.

The other day, in a field in Arizona where cotton is raised by irrigation, the cotton picking machine invented by the Rust brothers was given a trial. In an adjoining plot Negro field hands were picking by hand.

In three hours the mechanical picker gathered 600 pounds of cotton. The hand pickers gathered only 30 pounds apiece in the same time.

Behind it the machine left bare stalks and the cotton was as clean as that from the average handpicked lot.

The machine costs something to build and operate, of course, but still it is figured that the expense of machine picking will be about one-fifth that of hand picking.

Eli Whitney's cotton gin, one of the first important American inventions, made large scale cotton growing possible. It supplied the raw material which the machines for spinning and weaving, then newly developed, were demanding.

Finding uses for the seed the gin separated from the cotton came much later, but cottonseed oil and other products from this former waste are now industrially important.

Some persons will see in this cotton picking machine a threat of reduced employment for field hands during the picking season.

But it may well serve to increase all-year employment in many ways, by lowering the cost of cotton and enabling it to command a wider market.

# *Rust Mechanical Cotton Pickers Shown in Memphis by Inventors*

***Brothers Exhibit Machines as Finished Products of Ten Years' Work; Field Demonstrations Planned for Plantations.***

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Aug. 11.—(AP)—Eight mechanical "cotton pickers" stood today in front of a small factory.

John and Mack Rust, inventors, exhibited them to friends as the finished products of 10 years of work—describing them as practical cotton pickers.

Within a month, the Rust brothers said, the machines will be eating their way down cotton rows on two opposite sides of the earth, twirling white fibers off the plants and into their metal bowels and spewing cotton from their twisted sleeves as fast as a hundred pair of hands could pick it.

No field demonstration was attempted today, as there was no cotton hereabouts ready for picking.

The machine has been demonstrated a number of times during the last several years. After each demonstration, the inventors, former Texas boys who once picked cotton themselves and found it "back-breaking" labor, have worked on further improvements.

The brothers said that of the eight pickers, finally completed and assembled, one is an earlier experimental machine and will not be put into the field. Of the other seven, four will go into operation on the Fargason plantation near Clarksdale, Miss.; one will be used in the fields of Dr. Sherwood Eddy's co-operative farm project at Hillhouse, Miss., and another at the Delta experiment station, Stoneville, Miss. The seventh will tackle fields, yet to be arranged for, near Dallas, Texas.

John Rust said "earlier tests have satisfied us our picker will work," and that the new demonstration will be "an endurance test to see how the machine will stand up under continuous operation in the field under varying conditions."

Because of the effect of their machine on labor, the brothers said the program calls for an operating company to manufacture the machine under control of the Rust foundation. Stock and royalty dividends received by the inventors will be used for educational and social welfare projects aimed at relieving any dislocation of farm labor. Salaries of the inventors will be limited to ten times the amount paid the lowest full-time employe.

They propose not to sell the machines outright in this country, but to lease them, beginning at $1,000 for the first year and scaling down to $100 in later years. The operator, under the lease, must agree to maintain a minimum wage on the machine, and to employ no one under 16 years old. Some of the machines may be leased this year, Rust said. Plans for large-scale production will await the field trials and the reaction of planters.

# COTTON EXPERT FEARS USE OF RUST PICKER

**Federal Representative Says Machine Would Hurt Small Growers.**

WASHINGTON, Aug. 20.—(AP)—Fear that a newly-invented mechanical cotton picker might put thousands of small cotton growers out of business was expressed today by Oscar Johnston, administration cotton expert.

Coincidentally, the agriculture department named S. H. McCrory, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, to observe a public demonstration of the machine August 24 at Stoneville, Miss., and report to Secretary Wallace.

Johnston, who expected to accomapny McCrory, already has attended unofficial demonstrations of the device which was invented by two brothers, John and Mack Rust, Memphis mechanics. The Rust brothers have made attempts to forestall the displacement of labor by their machine. Despite these efforts, Johnston said in an interview:

**Constitute Great Threat.**

"Should the machine result in low cost production on the great plantations the small producer and the hand-picked would pass out of the picture."

If successful to the point of revolutionizing the industry as did Eli Whitney's cotton gin, Johnston added, the mechanical picker would constitute a threat to plans to make the small cotton farmer a home owner.

He called the machine's potentialities for southern agriculture "as dangerous as attractive."

"If the machine will do the job claimed for it," he said, "grave danger will attend the result. I am fearful for the small farmer in hill sections east of the Mississippi river, particularly in Georgia, Mississippi and Alabama."

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of

General

# AAA BIG AID TO FARMERS OF NATION

## Rooseveltian Policy Of Farm Relief Is Good ... Holsey

## BIG PAYMENTS

Southern sharecroppers who have been trying since the Civil War to secure a more equiptable distribution of the income from cotton are receiving a large share of government payments this year than under previous AAA programs.

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration, having learned through experience that special attention should be given the interests of tenants and sharecroppers has outlined the following procedure for division of government payments:

37 1-2 percent to the person furnishing the land.

12 1-2 percent to the person furnishing the work stock and equipment.

50 percent to be divided as the crop is divided.

This means that the payment share for the tenant varies with the leasing agreement between the landlord and the tenant but the sharecropper MUST receive at least 25 percent of the soil-conserving payments and this will be paid BY CHECK DIRECT FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO HE SHARECROPPER. Under previous programs, the sharecropper received only about 15 percent and the check was made out in most cases to the landlord. Many sharecroppers complained that they never received their share of the benefit payments.

The total number of sharecroppers in the United States in 1935 was 2,800,000, of which one-third were Negroes. During the same year, there were 185,065 Negro farm owners who cultivated more than 11,000,000 acres. The bulk of the Negro tenants and sharecroppers, as well as Negro land owners is in the South.

With the present prices and the largest domestic crop since 1933 farmers' income from cotton this season will probably be the largest since 1929-30 and from 70 to 80 percent larger than the low level of 1932-33. In adddition to sharing government payments, Negro cotton farmers in the South also will benefit by the increased prices brought about by the operation of the present Administration's farm policies.

Atlanta Daily World 10-7-36

# CROPS NOW ARE USED TO GIVE MOTOR FUEL

## Alcohol Distilled From Them Is Blended With Gasoline—Experts See New Outlet.

ATCHISON, Kan., Oct. 24 (AP).—Science has put farm products to work propelling motor vehicles over the highways.

This was accomplished by distilling alcohol from farm crops and blending it with gasoline for a power fuel now in use in the Midwest. The fuel contains about 10 per cent alcohol and 90 per cent gasoline.

In putting farm products to work science also may have found an answer to the crop surplus problem, some experts say.

Dr. Leo M. Christensen, Western representative of the Chemical Foundation, Inc., sponsor of the plant manufacturing alcohol, estimated that the Atchison plant, when operating at capacity, would require the work of 2,000 to 2,500 farmers annually.

"Suppose," he said, "that the entire motoring population of the United States used an average blend of 10 per cent today, the demand would require the efforts of 600 plants this size, an output of 35,000,000 acres and the labor of 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 farmers."

The first of the blend went on the market recently in a distribution area extending north to Sioux Falls, S. D., west to Central Nebraska, east to Central Iowa and south to Kansas City.

Three local users complained of an odor connected with the use of the fuel but otherwise the response was favorable.

Farm products now used in manufacture of the alcohol are corn, barley, rye, oats, cull Irish potatoes, grain and saccharine sorghums. Soon cull sweet potatoes will be shipped from Tennessee and Louisiana for a test. Cull fruit from California will be tried later, as will other products.

The actual output of the plant is a compound known as "agrol." It contains 50 per cent alcohol and 50 per cent other ingredients, principally gasoline, required by the alcohol tax unit of the Federal Government to prevent diversion of the alcohol to beverage use.

Agrol is sold to individual dealers who are taught how to blend it with gasoline.

Mont. Ala. 10-25-36

# PINES FOUND TO BE RICH IN YIELD OF FOOD VALUE

## Research Director Wants Cotton Studied For By-Products

Post 10-20-36 Birmingham

By United Press.

PENSACOLA, Fla., Oct. 20. — Southern pine trees may become a breakfast delicacy.

This and a number of other possibilities for developing Southern "waste" crops and new uses was explained today by Dr. H. E. Barnard, director of research for the Farm Chemurgic Council at the Gulf Coast Chemurgic and Tung Oil Conference.

Tons of sugar and sugar derivatives have been produced by German chemists, who extracted it from cellulose in sawmill and forest wastes, Barnard said.

### Use Sawmill Waste

If America is ever forced to it her experts will be abel to produce sugar for the morning coffee and cereal from the refuse of Southern sawmills.

"The day may never come in America when it is necessary to produce chocolate cream fillings yeast and other products from pine trees, as the German factories are now doing," Barnard continued. Barnard continued, "but there is one use to which Southern waste crops may be put immediately.

"That is the production of alcohol from the same sawmill waste.

"Alcohol is the obvious substitute for the gasoline used in American internal combustion engines."

Alcohol, Barnard pointed out, can be readily manufactured from the sawmill waste—sawdust, shavings, odd pieces of lumber—that is now used to fire boilers.

"In this light alcohol becomes a farm crop of great potential importance," Barnard said.

### Alcohol From Farms

"We have ready for conversion into fuel the immeasurably large production of our annual carbohydrate crop. We know we can easily produce alcohol from our farm products...but we do not know yet what fermentable materials can be used most economically.

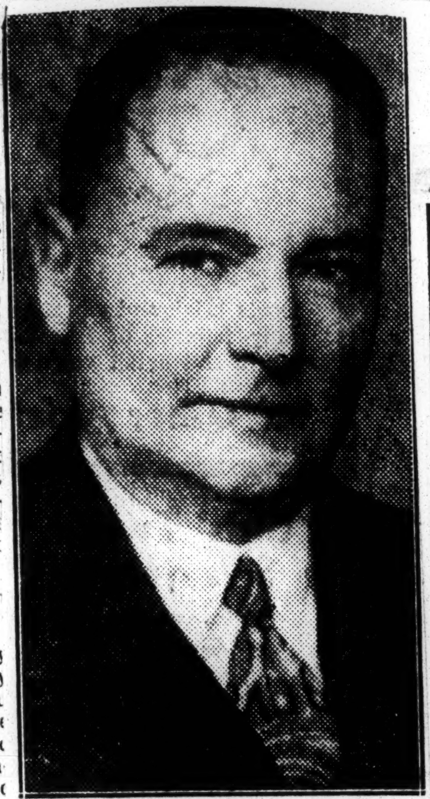
"We need to explore the possibilities of using corn starch, the sugar of sugar beets, the starches of the artichoke, of the dahlia, of white and sweet potatoes, and perhaps of many other starch and sugar bearing plants all readily grown in the South.

"It may be that the artichoke, heretofore classed in most cases as a lowly weed, is potentially one of our most important farm crops."

He devoted a part of his speech to a proposed plan for setting up a cotton research institute in the South to devote its time exclusively to the study and development of cotton and cotton products.

# Waste From Farms Seen as Basis For Economic Wealth of Future

### Noted Chemist Is First Speaker on Emory Centennial Program.



WILLIAM JAY HALE.

The decaying waste matter of southern farms was described as the basis of an industry that will solve the economic problems of the future by William J. Hale, noted Michigan chemist, in an address Friday night at the opening of the Emory University centennial celebration.

Alcohol, which can be made from fermented waste matter, will form the chemical backbone of this new industry, Dr. Hale, a director of organic research, stated. He visioned the new industry as a co-ordination of the factory and the farm in which all waste products will be interchanged and utilized to the utmost.

Dd. Hale called this industrial method of the future "chemurgy."

**Build For Abundance.**

"Evidence is accumulating on every hand that points directly to chemurgy as the only hope for a stranded and distraught people," he said. "As we build anew in the light of scientific procedure, we shall build for an abundant life and activity and thus make doubly secure a happiness and contentment that has long been overdue."

The famed chemist spoke before a large audience in Glenn Memorial auditorium on the Emory campus, where the celebration of the institution's 100th anniversary is now in progress. "Prosperity in a test tube" was the theme of his speech. Following Hale on the Emory program will be Dean Christian Gauss, nationally-known dean of the college of Princeton University, who will speak Saturday night at 8:15 o'clock in Glenn Memorial on "The Humane Tradition." Dean Gauss will be honored before his address at a dinner given by the Phi Beta Kappa chapter of Emory.

One great market for the alcohol which can be produced from the materials now wasted on the farm is in the extensive automotive industry, said Dr. Hale. Gasoline soon will be antiquated, he said.

**To Supplant Gasoline.**

"There is no longer any question concerning the higher efficiency of motor operation upon a 10 per cent alcohol-gasoline blend over the old-fashioned gasoline," he said. "Chemically speaking, gasoline constitutes a poor type of fuel for internal combustion motors."

"Incomplete combustion (with poisonous carbon monoxide at 7 to 10 per cent content in exhaust), knocking, carbon deposition, preignition—all detract from its further use. Even a 10 per cent alcohol content eliminates most of these drawbacks but a 20 per cent alcohol content eliminates them all. As we progress higher in alcoholic content of motor fuel, we make way for the coming of the small and powerful motor of high compression."

Dr. Hale assailed those who scoff at the practicability of industrializing the waste material of the farm. "Much may be said about the impossibility of diverting agricultural waste to industrial ends," he said, "but this takes no cognizance of modern chemistry. It was all well enough in other days to get rid of surplus corn by feeding it to hogs, so that chemically transformed starch into fat might be marketed as fat hogs.

"But today no one cares for fat hogs, hence this old-time procedure is moribund. We regret that this ancient practice has persisted even down to our own times. Its passing now is doubly assured."

**Warns Industry.**

Dr. Hale sounded a warning to industry if industrialists should fail to aid farmers in the utilization of waste products. "To turn a deaf ear to the entreaties of the farmer would be for industry to write its own epitaph," he said.

"New and widely varying uses for the by-products of the farm are now under intensive study in all lands," Dr. Hale said. "Indeed this search may be described as the greatest of all national motifs of today. It rings at its highest pitch in Germany and Italy. Self sufficiency shall determine the ruling nations of the future.

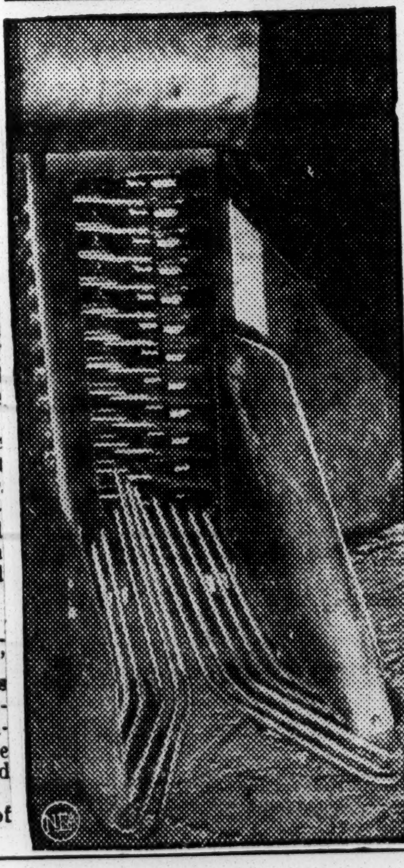
"The present conception of the farm as merely the source of food, raiment and shelter will soon be obsolete." Dr. Hale said. The new farm, what he described as the "farm chemurgic", will be an industrial enterprise in which food and raiment will be incidental products, he said.

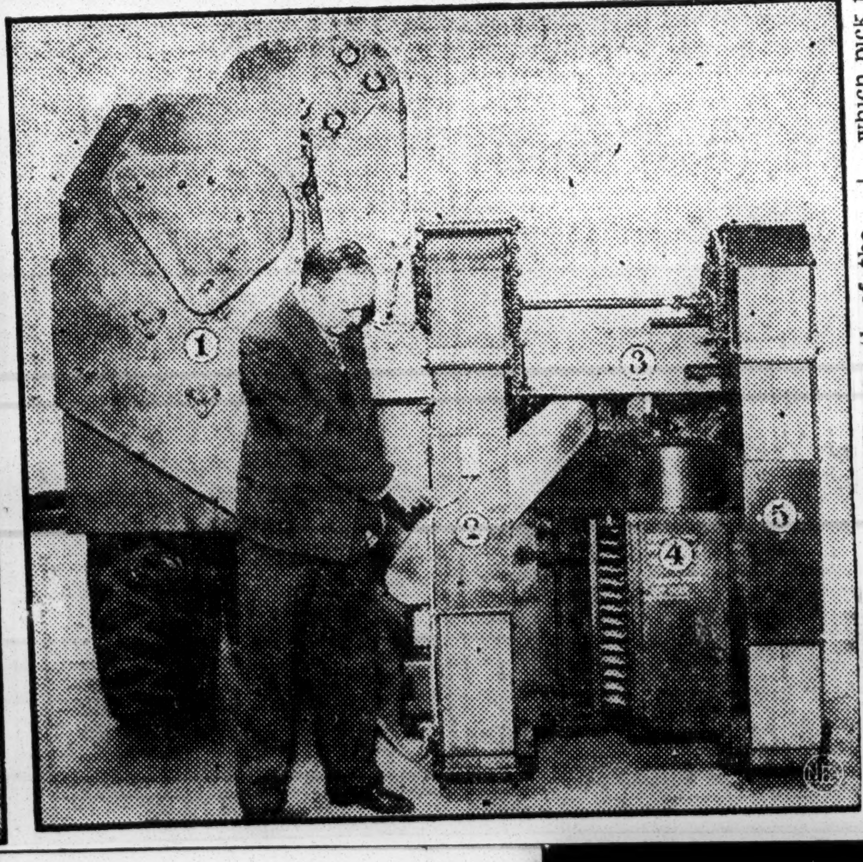
**"Begin Life Anew."**

"Some industrialists decry the chemurgic development of agriculture," said Dr. Hale. "Wherever there is likelihood of some ancient line of manufacture being supplanted by innovations taking their rise in chemurgy we invited them to join our ranks and begin life anew," the chemist said.

The Emory speaker was guest of honor Friday night previous to his address at a dinner given in the Emory dining hall by the Georgia section of the American Chemical society, which joined with Emory in sponsoring his appearance here. Dr. Alfred Scott of the University of Georgia chemistry department, chairman of the Georgia section, presided. Dr. Hale was introduced at Glenn Memorial by Dr. J. Sam Guy, head of the Emory chemistry department.

# New Mechanical Cotton Picker Is Shown In North






First device of its kind shown north of the Mason and Dixon line, a new mechanical cotton picker, developed by International Harvester, is displayed in the top photo. Russell H. Miller of the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, is at the controls. The potted cotton plant shows where it enters the machine to be stripped. At left, lower photo, is a closeup of the spindles which pick the cotton. They are heavy pins, with burrs on them. The plant is pushed past the pins, which strip the cotton and then it is taken off the pins by a set of rotating disks. At right, lower photo, is a rear view of the device. Parts of the machine, as indicated by numbers, are: 1, cleaner; 2, elevator; 3, conveyor; 4, spindles that pick the cotton, the plants passing out at left; 5, elevator.

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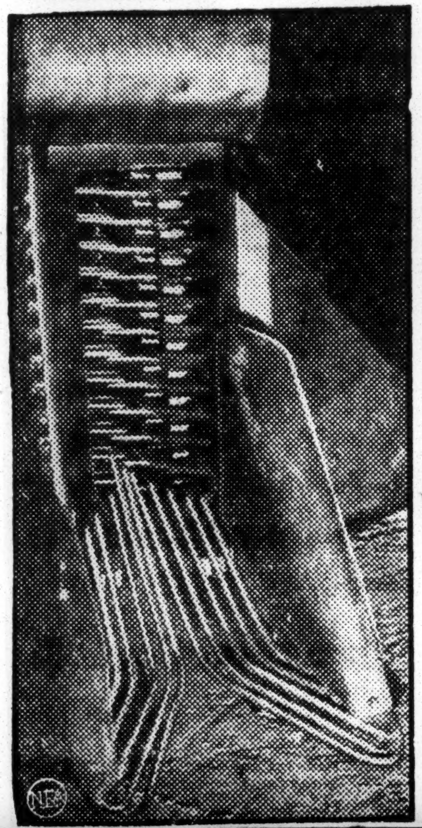

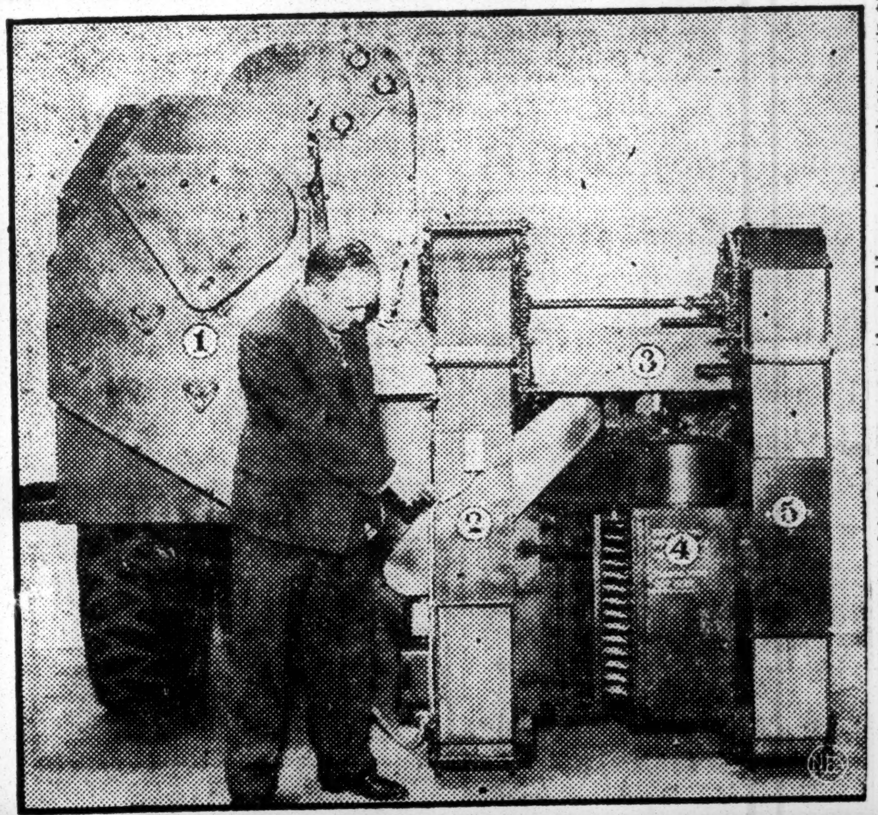


First device of its kind shown north of the Mason ani Dixon line, a new mechanical cotton picker, developed by International Harvester, is displayed in the top photo. Russell H. Miller of the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, is at the controls. The potted cotton plant shows where it enters the machine to be stripped. At left, lower photo, is a closeup of the spindles which pick the cotton. They are heavy pins, with burrs on them. The plant is pushed past the pins, which strip the cotton and then it is taken off the pins by a set of rotating disks. At right, lower photo, is a rear view of the device. Parts of the machine, as indicated by numbers, are: 1, cleaner; 2, elevator; 3, conveyor; 4, spindles that pick the cotton, the plants passing out at left; 5, elevator.

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of

Georgia

# STATE PLANTERS GET $32,000,000 IN FEDERAL AID

## Soil Conservation Movement Finds Favor; 120,876 Share in Disbursement by AAA in This State.

ATHENS, Ga., June 13.—(AP)—Director Harry Brown, of the state agricultural extension service, said today farmers owning an estimated 85 per cent of Georgia's cultivated land would co-operate in the federal government's new farm program.

He said he based his estimate on preliminary reports from county agents.

The new program, designed to encourage soil conservation, was adopted after the supreme court killed the AAA.

Brown said today Georgia farmers received more than $32,000,000 through April in rental and benefit payments under the old farm program. He said also that through June 11 cotton price adjustment payments of $3,751,0?9 had been made to 120,876 Georgia farmers.

Under the cotton price program, the farmer gets the difference between 12 cents a pound and the average price of cotton on 10 designated markets on the day of sale. Brown said nearly 40,000 farmers who grew cotton last year had not applied for price adjustment payments. He asked them to check up to see if they were entitled to any such payments.

**Participation Exceeds Anticipation.**

The director said if the estimated participation of Georgia farmers in the new soil conservation program "turns out to be correct, it will mean that more Georgia farmers have made plans to co-operate with the new program than the agricultural adjustment officials expected when they drafted the new program. The program was planned on the basis of about 80 per cent co-operation."

The time for Georgia farmers to turn in worksheets indicating their planting plans ended this week.

Brown said farmers co-operating under the new program are not expected to adjust their cotton, tobacco and peanut acreages as much under the new program as under the old crop adjustment programs. This, he said, is because the new program emphasizes soil conservation and balanced farming, and not crop adjustment.

Another phase of the farm situation was discussed at a state-wide meeting of resettlement administration workers in Macon Friday.

C. I. Cowden, regional chief of the farm debt adjustment program, told the Macon meeting that farmers who have been helped by the resettlement program "have not been rehabilitated until their old debts have been looked into and adjusted." He said the services of the farm debt adjustment program were available to all farmers who are in danger of losing their property, and not alone to persons who have been taken off relief rolls.

Fred Whelchel, farm management specialist of the resettlement administration, said it was important that farmers grow necessary foodstuffs and feed crops to help offset the effects of the drouth in Georgia.

In his statement here today, Director Brown said that under the 1934 and 1935 crop adjustment programs Georgia farmers reduced cotton acreage 31 per cent below the average for 1929-1933. Under the new program the farmers in a county cannot get payments for shifting more than 25 per cent of their cotton to soil-conserving crops.

Two kinds of payments will be made under the program. Farmers will get a payment on poundage, or acreage basis, on land shifted from soil-depleting crops, and will get another payment, not exceeding $1 an acre, on total acreage in soil-conserving crops.

Brown said the worksheets do not bind the farmers to do anything, but simply set forth acreages they have been planting to different crops, and the changes contemplated this year. A worksheet must be turned in before a farmer can apply for a payment under the program.

Applications for payment will be made this fall.

Agriculture-1936
Improvement of.

Georgia.

Canton, Ga., Cherokee Advance
April 3, 1936

# Georgia Experiment Station Studying New Fiber Plants

A program of research into the possibilities of growing fiber flax and ramie another fiber plant, in Georgia is now well underway, according to an announcement from H. P. Stuckey, director of the Georgia Experiment Station.

Stuckey points out that during the last year the North Georgia Branch Experiment Station at Blairsville grew about 500 pounds of Canadian fiber flax, and that the flax gave yields that compared favorably with flax growing sections. Further study into the possibility of growing flax in the state has been planned.

Under a similar cooperative agreement, Stuckey said that about 6,000 ramie plants are being planted in the state this year. The plants were furnished by the United States Department of Agriculture, and they will be planted at the Experiment Station near Griffin, and at the Industrial College for Negroes near Savannah.

The fiber that is produced, Stuckey said will be turned over to the textile specialists of the Georgia School of Technology for experimentation to work out better methods of taking Georgia grown fiber and making it into textile products.

# Tugwell Explains How One Agency Assists Distressed Farm Families

***Administrator Pictures Plight of Five Million Rural Folk; Land Utilization Division Buying 209,000 Acres in Georgia Counties To Start Proper Land Utilization.***

*Photos in Rotogravure Section.*

**By R. G. TUGWELL,**
**Rural Resettlement Administrator.**

One of the most challenging facts which the events of the past few years have brought home to all of us is that for many Americans economic opportunity has been severely limited. We are obliged to admit that the poverty which afflicts millions of our citizens is not necessarily due to shiftlessness or lack of ambition. Many distressed unemployed sincerely want to work and provide for their families; but do not have an opportunity to do so.

Constitution

The federal government, in co-operation with state and local governments, has inaugurated a definite policy of aiding those persons who have become economically stranded through no particular fault of their own. To restore these people to an independent and self-sustaining basis has become an essential part of the plant to achieve a sounder national economy.

4-5-36

Carrying a major role in this wide national plan is the Resettlement Administration which was established by the President on April 30, 1935, with the following functions and duties:

**Three Functions.**

1. To make loans with a view to financing reliable farmers, farm tenants, croppers and laborers so that they may be placed on a self-supporting basis.

Atlanta

2. To administer approved projects involving resettlement of destitute or low-income families in rural and suburban areas.

3. To initiate and administer a program to check the misuse of land and to promote forestation, soil erosion control, and flood control.

The Resettlement Administration is making a simultaneous attack upon these problems. Primary among these problems is the widespread distress in the agricultural regions of the country. A few figures will indicate the nature of the situation: in 1930 one million farm families received an income of less than $400 a year. This is not $400 in cash. It includes the value of all products of the farm, whether sold, or consumed at home. To put it another way: some five million farm people were living on less than 22 cents a day.

For some of these people the general improvement in agriculture has enabled them once again to make a living. But there are many who are unable to take advantage of the improved market for farm products.

**Rural Rehabilitation..**

In the first place, there is the farmer who has good land, but who has had his working capital wiped out by the depression. He does not have the seed, implements, animals and the like which are necessary to work the land and raise a crop, and his credit has been exhausted.

To farmers in this position our division of rural rehabilitation makes small loans, running from $50 to $200, which enable them to get on their feet again. It is a method of re-establishing the credit of the individual farmer. Loans are secured by liens on the crops.

Sixty-eight million dollars has been lent in this way, and the fact that nine million dollars has already been paid back with interest shows that our trust in these people has not been misplaced.

Sometimes the farmers' difficulties are partly due to lack of skill and experience. To make sure that they get the most out of their land, the farmers who are receiving loans, and any others who ask for advice, are helped by our agricultural experts to work out an economical plan for managing their farms.

Occasionally families are so destitute that they must receive immediate cash assistance. In such extreme cases emergency grants are made to sustain them until satisfactory arrangements for loans and management plans can be made.

It is noteworthy that some 500,000 farm families have already been aided by this plan.

**Resettlement in Georgia.**

In Georgia, a predominantly agricultural state, the Resettlement Administration is primarily concerned with the problems of the farmer. Since last July our rehabilitation division has advanced over $2,000,000, mostly in the form of loans, to farmers throughout the state. These loans have afforded many Georgia farmers the opportunity to become self-sustaining and have resulted in a great saving in the cost of relief to county, state and federal authorities.

Voluntary Farm Debt Adjustment Committees, working under the supervision of the Resettlement Administration, have adjusted 161 farm debt cases in Georgia in the last three months of 1935. The original indebtedness of these farmers was reduced through agreements with their creditors by $86,500.

With respect to submarginal land, Georgia State Land Planning Consultants have indicated that there are over three and a half million acres in the state which should be retired from their present use. Our division of land utilization is at present buying more than 209,000 acres in 11 Georgia counties as a start toward proper land utilization in the state. In five tracts near Eatonton, Cornelia, Waycross, Warm Springs and Greensboro this land will be developed as land use demonstration projects. While 832 families live on the land to be purchased, it is expected that a few of them will find it necessary to leave the vicinity of their former homes, since the government will offer them assistance in relocating on better land not far from the project areas.

The Plantation Piedmont Project, near Eatonton, largest of the projects, has been approved for purchase of 125,000 acres. Recreation, game preservation and reforestation are the major objectives of this project. There are more than 1,000 men engaged at present in the work of turning this land into proper condition.

The Northeast Georgia Upland Game Conservation Project, near Cornelia, will be made up of 50,000 acres. Here reforestation, game preservation and fish restocking will be carried on.

**Project Near Waycross.**

On the Coastal Flatwoods Project, near Waycross, pasturage and game conservation will be the primary aims. The area to be taken over comprises about 30,000 acres.

Near Warm Springs a project called the Pine Mountain State Park Extension will involve purchase of 3,500 acres. The major development in this park, recreation facilities, will be accompanied by work of reforestation.

Alexander H. Stevens Memorial State park, near Greensboro, will contain 900 acres. As at Pine Mountain, recreation will be accompanied by reforestation in the development.

These lands use developments, besides creating ultimate new sources of wealth through increase in timber, recreation, resources, wild life and grazing lands, are at present furnishing employment for over 3,000 men taken from the relief rolls.

The Rural Resettlement program in Georgia involves the resettlement of 903 families on 13 projects located throughout the state. To date four of these projects are under construction with 498 men at work on them. Land is now being optioned on the other nine projects. The four projects now under construction—Briar Patch, Putnam county; Piedmont, Jasper county; Irwinville, Irwin county, and Wolfe Creek, Grady county, are all community projects. The other nine projects are what are known as infiltration projects, which means that the Resettlement Administration will not set up a separate community for the families, but will simply offer them the opportunity to settle on good farms in already established communities. These projects will be located in the following counties: Lee, Sumter, Terrell, Bartow, Gwinnett, Lowndes, Henry, Wheeler, Worth and Gordon.

All of these projects are intended to give economically underprivileged Georgia farmers the opportunity to raise their standard of living by farming good land according to approved agricultural methods.

**Farm Debt Adjustment.**

One of the most serious causes of rural poverty is heavy debt. At prevailing prices for farm products it is impossible for thousands of farmers to keep up payments on their mortgages, many of which were taken out in boom times. The Resettlement Administration organizes voluntary committees of local citizens who try to get debtor and creditor to come to an agreement which might result in reducing the amount of the debt, or extending the time in which it may be repaid. This plan has worked very successfully. In the last three months of 1,935 creditors to whom was owed some $20,000,000 agreed to reductions totaling $6,500,000, a reduction of 31.7 per cent.

**Causes of Rural Poverty.**

Unfortunately, the roots of rural poverty strike deeper into the substance of our economic system. In many parts of the United States the standard of living of the farmers is permanently kept below the poverty line by forces outside the control of the individuals themselves.

One of the reasons for this condition is farm tenancy. In the United States there are over 2,500,000 farm tenants—42 per cent of all our farmers—and their number is growing more rapidly today than ever before in our history. The farm operated by a full owner supports one family. The farm operated by tenant must yield two incomes. This puts a premium on cash crops and a large yearly cash turnover. When the crop fails, or prices are low, a tenant cannot supplement his cash income with food for his own needs. At the same time, constant cultivation of a single cash crop, such as cotton, depletes the fertility of the soil and still further reduces the income which can be derived from the land.

An even more serious cause of rural poverty is the farming of submarginal or in simpler terms, unproductive land. It is estimated that in the United States there are 650,000 families trying to farm land on which it is physically impossible to grow crops that pay. In some cases the land was originally productive, but improper cultivation has exhausted its fertility and erosion has washed away the good soil. In other cases, the land never was suitable for crop farming.

Rural poverty, whether due to tenancy or the farming of submarginal land, is costly to the whole nation. Improper cultivation of the land destroys its productivity. Relief payments, on which in some rural districts 30 to 40 per cent of the people depend, are a heavy burden on local and federal revenues. Tax delinquency on submarginal farms is high and means that, although schools, roads and other services must be provided for the people living on these farms, they do not contribute their share in meeting the expense.

Of course, the heaviest cost is in human distress and social decay. If conditions are not remedied, future years are likely to see a great extension and intensification of rural poverty. For the sake of both the present and the future, we must find and apply a permanent remedy to this problem.

**Rural Resettlement.**

Our division of rural resettlement therefore affords the more deserving of these people the opportunity to set up as independent farmers on good land. The plan is simple: The Resettlement Administration grub-stakes these farmers to a fresh start. It

buys good land, builds houses, barns and the like, helps the settlers move to their new farms, and advises them how to get the best out of the land. Sometimes these farms will be rented; sometimes they will be sold to the farmers after a trial period. In any case, the government will be paid back the money it has spent. The program may be regarded as an investment, and not an expense.

The people being resettled are carefully selected for character and ability. The present program calls for the eventual resettlement of some 21,000 families, most of whom are now dependent on some kind of public relief. Of these, about 6,000 are farming submarginal land; the remainder are, for the most part, tenants.

Altogether, plans for 204 projects have been approved. Twenty-seven of these are already under construction, and for 115 of the projects land is now being optioned. The work of building houses, roads, schools and so on, will be done by relief labor, and will provide employment for several thousand workmen.

**Land Utilization.**

It is natural to ask what will be done with the submarginal land on which 6,000 of these families are living at present. This brings us to a problem which is hardly less serious than rural poverty, and which is closely related to it.

To crop-farm this land is simply going against nature, and only ruins it for any other use. However, the land on many of these farms is suitable for forestry or grazing, and can be developed toward such natural uses. In other cases, the farms can be joined together to make game preserves or recreation areas.

It is important to all of us that this land be used in the proper way. As a nation, we have wasted our land recklessly in the past. Our great forests have been ruthlessly exploited. The plow has been put to fields that should have remained in grass. Today, the whole country is paying the price for this wasteful use of the land. Dust storms and floods are the dramatic penalties for misuse of the land. The slow processes of erosion and exhaustion of the soil are no less costly.

It is the work of our division of land utilization to turn these farms to the best use; for grazing, forest, game preserves or recreational areas. A total of 206 projects are being undertaken which call for the improvement of about 10,000,000 acres of misused land.

**Suburban Resettlement.**

The last great task of the Resettlement Administration is for the benefit of city workers and neighboring farmers. One of the most difficult and pressing problems of the modern city is the lack of adequate housing for people of modest incomes. To point the way toward a solution of this problem, our division of suburban resettlement is building four small towns near Washington, D. C., Bound Brook, N. J.; Cincinnati, Ohio, and Milwaukee, Wis., which will provide homes for people of limited means who work in the near-by cities. There will be room for from 700 to 1,000 families in each town.

In each instance, the town is situated within commuting distance of the places of employment, but well outside the urban district. Its rural setting will be preserved by an encircling "greenbelt" of woods, pasture and farm land which will be owned in perpetuity by the community. This will prevent factories and great buildings from crowding in around the housing area, and will provide areas for gardening and farming.

The affairs of the town will be conducted entirely by its citizens who will form a corporation to collect rents and repay the investment to the government, care for the maintenance of public services, and pay state and local taxes. The Resettlement Administration will exercise no more jurisdiction than is absolutely necessary to protect its investment.

**A National Work.**

Obviously, the Resettlement Administration cannot hope to rectify more than a fraction of the injustice which a blind economic process has worked. Our organization is carrying on only one part of a great national work which demands the co-operation of the federal government, states, counties and all progressive organizations and individuals. What we are doing is to set an example and to afford opportunities for people to achieve economic independence and the self-respect which this brings.

# NEGRO CO-OPERATIVE TO MARKET PRODUCE

**Colored Farmers To Ship Products to Distribution Centers in Atlanta.**

Negro farmers in 22 rural communities throughout the state have been organized during the last few months into a co-operative association for the marketing of their products by J. B. Blayton, president of the Atlanta negro chamber of commerce and professor of economics at Atlanta University, assisted by county agents in the respective communities and 18 students of Morehouse College. Approximately $25,000 worth of produce will be shipped here in June, the first month of operations, it was announced.

The organization is believed to be first of its type in the south. Farmers, both those who own farms and those who are share-croppers, were organized into clubs of about 25 members. Charts showing how much land each club has cultivated, the approximate amount to be produced and the time for shipment will be kept at the headquarters here.

Groups will pool their resources and ship their products by truck to Atlanta. Distribution centers, to be set up in many parts of the city, will be staffed by students. It is planned, it was said, to organize a consumers' co-operative association which will work conjointly with farmers' organization.

Students are selling advance orders for produce to obtain capital for preliminary expenses. Purchase cards stipulate that buyers may obtain an amount of produce equal to the price of the card. The Atlanta negro chamber of commerce will guarantee all promises to the co-operative society regarding sales and advance orders, it was said.

The association, because of the amount of produce handled and the methods used in distribution, expects to sell foodstuffs as cheaply as any merchandising organization in the city, it was said.

Atlanta, Ga. Constitution
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County agents will aid the farmers in the different communities where the co-operative clubs are formed, and students at Atlanta negro colleges will assist in the operation of market centers here.

Approximately $25,000 worth of produce will be brought here in June, first month of operation of the co-operative plan, to be distributed through centers set up here.

Advance orders are being taken to finance the first market, and consumers are given cards good for an equivalent amount in produce. The negro Chamber of Commerce will guarantee the filling of all orders.

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Waycross, Ga., Journal-Herald
June 2, 1936

## Co-operating Negro Farmers

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It is believed that this is the first co-operative association of Negro farmers ever to be organized in the South.

The plan is to ship agricultural products into Atlanta there to be marketed.

It is planned to organize a Negro Consumers' Association to work hand in hand with the Farmers' organization.

In order to obtain operating capital farm produce is now being sold for cash with the produce to be delivered later. Cards are given the purchasers entitled them to so much produce at a later date.

Augusta, Ga., Labor Review
July 10, 1936

## Negro Farmers Establish Co-op Markets in State

ATLANTA, Ga.—The colored Co-operative Farmers of Georgia have established two depots in Atlanta for the distribution of their products—one at 182 Auburn Avenue, Northeast, and the other at the corner of Hunter and Chestnut streets, Southwest. For the past three weeks the farmers have been sending daily trucks to Atlanta, bringing tomatoes, okra, cabbage, turnips, beans, black-eyed peas, squash, watermelons, cantaloupes, corn, cucumbers, onions, potatoes, etc.

There are about 22 groups of farmers, each group consisting of approximately 25 members. They are located in widely separated localities; some as far south as Thomasville, some near Columbus, Waycross, Albany, etc. Because the groups are so scattered, the operations of the co-operative have not been seriously curtailed by the drouth.

Those at the head of the enterprise are already investigating the feasibility of establishing selling depots in Chattanooga, Tenn.

The farmers wish to bring other negro farming groups into their organization and will welcome inquiries from interested persons.

Requests for information should be addressed to J. B. Blayton, Department of Economics, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Ga.

buys good land, builds houses, barns and the like, helps the settlers move to their new farms, and advises them how to get the best out of the land. Sometimes these farms will be rented; sometimes they will be sold to the farmers after a trial period. In any case, the government will be paid back the money it has spent. The program may be regarded as an investment, and not an expense.

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The plan is to ship agricultural products into Atlanta there to be marketed.

It is planned to organize a Negro Consumers' Association to work hand in hand with the Farmers' organization.

In order to obtain operating capital farm produce is now being sold for cash with the produce to be delivered later.

Cards are given the purchasers entitled them to so much produce at a later date.

Augusta, Ga., Labor Review
July 10, 1936

# Negro Farmers Establish Co-op Markets in State

ATLANTA, Ga.—The colored Co-operative Farmers of Georgia have established two depots in Atlanta for the distribution of their products—one at 182 Auburn Avenue, Northeast, and the other at the corner of Hunter and Chestnut streets, Southwest. For the past three weeks the farmers have been sending daily trucks to Atlanta, bringing tomatoes, okra, cabbage, turnips, beans, black-eyed peas, squash, watermelons, cantaloupes, corn, cucumbers, onions, potatoes, etc.

There are about 22 groups of farmers, each group consisting of approximately 25 members. They are located in widely separated localities; some as far south as Thomasville, some near Columbus, Waycross, Albany, etc. Because the groups are so scattered, the operations of the co-operative have not been seriously curtailed by the drouth.

Those at the head of the enterprise are already investigating the feasibility of establishing selling depots in Chattanooga, Tenn.

The farmers wish to bring other negro farming groups into their organization and will welcome inquiries from interested persons.

Requests for information should be addressed to J. B. Blayton, Department of Economics, Atlanta University, Atlanta, Ga.

Agriculture-1936
Improvement of.

Mississippi.

# MACHINE SPEEDS PICKING OF COTTON

## But Many Drawbacks Are Apparent and Planters at Test Remain Skeptical.

## GATHERS FOREIGN MATTER

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Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

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None who saw the machine in operation today could deny its ability to pick cotton under conditions of crop and land such as prevail around Stoneville. Yet many went away skeptical and many were the objections voiced by planters and experts who came from all parts of the Cotton Belt to see what the machine would do.

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2—The machine requires flat country to operate efficiently and thus is not adaptable for use in upland fields, such as predominate in Georgia, Arkansas and much of Tennessee.

3. Since the bulk of the cotton crop is still produced by sharecroppers, who must be maintained the year round for hoeing and chopping and other stages of cultivation, it would amount to an unnecessary expense to lease mechanical pickers except where a crop was harvested with day labor.

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"After all, I don't know of any harvesting machine that is more than 95 per cent efficient. Even a combine does not get all of the grain. But the wheat farmers aren't thinking about going back to the scythe and flail on that account.

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# Mississippi Official Says Cotton Picker Not Perfect

JACKSON, MISS., Sept. 1.—(AP)—"Mississippians will be picking cotton by hand for a long time yet," J. C. Holton, state commissioner of agriculture, said today upon his return from Stoneville where he witnessed the demonstration of the Rust mechanical cotton picker yesterday.

"It's the best machine of its kind ever invented, I'm sure," Mr. Holton said, "but it still isn't perfect enough and I don't see that it's practical for Mississippi right now."

Should Mississippi farmers begin using the machine, Mr. Holton said, they would have to let their cotton stay on the fields until nearly every boll on each stalk was open, whereas, the hand pickers now go over the same field two or three times.

"The cotton picked by the machine is also more trashy than that picked by hand," Mr. Holton said.

"We can't tell how good the machine is until we see the ginned cotton."

# COOPERATIVE DELTA FARMERS PROFIT BY PLAN, SAYS LECTURER

Informer 11-14-38
Houston Texas

HOUSTON. — Speaking at Houston College for Negroes Monday, Rev. J. H. Franklin, representative of the Sherwood Eddy Farm, Hillhouse, Mississippi, told a heroic story of the fight being made by thirty-two sharecroppers and their families to make a place for themselves through co-operatively farming 200 acres in the Delta.

Rev. Franklin pointed out that there is no way to give farmers a life abundant under the sharecropping system. Crops are poor. The tenant has to give up from a 1-3 to 1-2 of returns already too small. Land can't be diversified because the tenant can't finance the crops. No plan to conserve the land will work. The system is astride the South's neck like the old man.

Farmers organized a union in Arkansas and were beaten and persecuted by landlords and officials. Whites were beaten when they tried to investigate the murder of Frank Weems, a Negro, who was a material witness against the floggers. The Eddy Farm group gave Mrs. Weems and her eight children a home. In fact, most of those on the Eddy Farm are down and out sharecroppers.

Collectivized farms is the answer to all of the sharecroppers problems, says Rev. Franklin. He thinks the mechanical cotton-picker is a good thing and believes co-operative farming will enable Negroes to make an advantage out of what otherwise would be a disadvantage. If instead of a hundred farms of fifteen or twenty acres each, there are 1500 acres of cotton it will be economical to employ the cotton picker. Besides Mr. Rush, the inventor, is on the board of directors of the Eddy Farm.

The farm is divided into two general divisions: producers' co-operatives and consumers' co-operatives. Every member belongs to both. All produce and then but what is produced. What would be divided is divided among the members. The management is democratic. The Board of Counsel, composed of five has three Negroes and two whites. The Counsel determines the basis of pay and all other matters affecting the farm.

In the year they have built twenty-seven houses, put 275 acres in cotton and produced lumber on a large scale. In fact their lumber has been their chief income. They allow each family about $18 a month and charge it to dividend. The farm was bought through a loan secured by Dr. Eddy, hence, the name. Undoubtably the success of the movement is due to the direction of Rev. Franklin, who has had wide experience with co-operatives in England and China, where he served as missionary five years.

The movement raises several interesting queries. Has the sharecropper the capacity to appreciate and improve the opportunity? Rev Frnaklin says their experience proves that he has. Will co-operative work out economically? He cites figures showing an equity of $13,500 built up in one year. Can co-operatives gear in with and work with other organizations? He cited instances where this one had

Can the white man and Negro work together? Rev. Franklin says they meet together now and plan together and seldom divide on racial lines. Whites voluntarily contributed so that the Negro school could be the same length as theirs. Of course, they do not aim at what is called social equality, that issue doesn't arise. Economic co-operation is emphasized throughout. Can religion help? Well, they practice it every day.

Rev. Franklin makes a pleasing and frank presentation. One feels that they are sincere at the Eddy farm. When the Reverend asked for aid this reporter forked up a whole big dollar. That's a big recommendation for anybody's farm money. Everybody that heard the when they can get newspaper men's talk promised to aid. If this farm succeeds others will be started. Success means taking sharecroppers out of slavery. Any desiring to send contribution can do so through Dean R. O. Lanier, Houston College for Negroes, Houston.

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"I hope it won't work," said A. F. Toler, Johnston's business associate, "because it would upset our present system and southern agriculture would be in a turmoil in the future."

"Im afraid it would be hard on the tenants. We have about 1,000 families working on our plantations cultivating about 22,000 acres.

"It might be possible to co-ordinate labor and the machine but there's one thing a machine can't do and that is chop cotton in the spring. We've got to keep our labor to do that work."

The Georgia delegation will inspect cotton baling work at the Delta and Pine Land Company plants, latest methods of ginning, and various cotton-breeding experiments. They will be entertained at a barbecue dinner on the plantation.

## TEST OF COTTON PICKER PROVES SATISFACTORY

STONEVILLE, Miss., Aug. 30.—(AP)—Mack Rust, coinventor of mechanical cotton picker, ran his machine through preliminary tests here today before exhibiting it in a public demonstration Monday.

The blunt nosed, rubber tired machine operated in a manner apparently satisfactory to its builders.

W. C. Ayers, manager of the Delta Experimental Station farm, where the experimental tests were held, said he thought the test "fairly satisfactory."

Mack Rust planned to make a few mechanical adjustments before the demonstration Monday.

Ayers declared that if the machine proved successful in exhaustive tests this fall on the experimental farm, it would be successful in any section of the country.

"Conditions on our farm are below average," Ayers said. "The cotton is not satisfactory. It is premature because of the drouth and the result is that it is harder to pick by hand or machine."

# ECONOMIC QUESTION TO FORE IN TEST RUN OF COTTON MACHINE

## Rust Brothers' Invention Picks Bolls, But Leaves More Trash in Lint

## SHOWN AT STONEVILLE

## Reduced Grade May Offset Labor Saving Costs

## STAPLE LEFT ON GROUND

### Removal of Debris by Gins Will Determine Usefulness of Mechanical Device Over Hand Picker

BY DICK BREESE
Staff Correspondent of The Commercial Appeal

STONEVILLE, Miss., Aug. 31.—The Rust mechanical cotton picker proved to hundreds of farmers, agricultural experts and curiosity seekers here today that it can pick cotton but a question mark continued to hang over its economic practicability.

The widely publicized demonstration began early this morning on the farm of V. H. and J. W. Weilenman and cotton men from as far away as Oklahoma and Georgia were on hand to see the machine that might revolutionize the cotton industry.

The field selected had a heavy stand of Stoneville 2B cotton inch and an eighth staple and averaging a bale to the acre.

**Crop Well Matured**

It was well matured with only one or two unopened bolls to the stalk which were about three feet high. While the leaves of the rows touched, the stalks did not lap.

Towed by a tractor, the Rust picker moved down the rows at about a three-mile an hour speed, a V-shaped trough straddling the row and bringing the stalks into the revolving spindles. The machine has 1,344 of these spindles, arranged in vertical rows of 16 each on an endless belt which travels at the same speed as the tractor so that they are virtually stationary with the stalk.

These smooth spindles are moistened, and the cotton adheres to them and then is stripped off and conveyed by a blower to a large bag.

Making two trips over the same row, the picker was getting about 80 to 95 per cent of the bolls, but was leaving a small percentage of the cotton it had picked on the ground.

The picked cotton contained more trash than cotton gathered by hand, and introduced a new problem—the content of green leaves in the lint cotton. Whether the gin could remove all the debris and whether the leaves would stain the cotton will not be known until it is ginned.

**Expect Lower Grade**

The majority of farmers who saw the demonstration agreed that the cotton picked would grade at least two grades lower than if it had been picked by hand because of the trash and leaves. They also agreed that the only question was whether the machine would save enough in the picking to offset the loss on the lowered grade, and the loss on the cotton it leaves on the stalk and knocks to the ground.

Mack Rust of Memphis, co-inventor of the machine with his brother, John, was in charge of the demonstration while John is en route to Russia with two of the pickers for tests by the Soviet government.

Mr. Rust said that his machine would pick an acre an hour on an average, going over a row only once and that the total cost, including the tractor and two operators, would be about $1 to $1.50 an hour. If Mr. Rust is correct, his machine in one hour can pick as much cotton as five laborers can in a day, saving approximately $8 to $10 a bale in picking costs.

**Test First Step**

Today's demonstration is only the first step, however, in testing the machine. Charles A. Bennett, engineer in charge of cotton ginning operations of the Department of Agriculture, and F. L. Gerdes, federal cotton technician, attached to Delta Experiment Station at Stoneville, reserved their opinions on the picker.

"The government is deeply interested in this invention and we are going to follow it through from the field to the textile mill," Mr. Bennett said.

"We are going to test the field performance on the percentage of cotton it picks, the cotton it leaves on the stalk and on the ground. The cost of operation will be determined. Then we will gin the cotton, comparing it with hand-picked cotton from the same field and find if the leaves will stain the staple and how much of the trash can be removed. Then we will spin the cotton in our experimental spinning mill at Clemson College, S. C., for the final test before we announce our opinion on the picker."

Farmers were impressed with the way the picker got the cotton, yet did not disturb the unopened bolls. The stalks were skinned slightly and bent over a trifle but growers agreed that the process would not injure future development of late cotton.

**Johnston On Hand**

Oscar Johnston, manager of the largest cotton plantation in the world, at Scott, and manager of the government cotton pool, declared that the machine "seems basically sound."

"This picker is fraught with serious economic possibilities," he said, "but much improvement is needed before it is successful and will require co-operation from every phase of the industry. Breeders will have to develop a cotton plant of standard size and height, with bolls opening early and about the same time—the picker cannot operate in the late fall after rains and frost, I don't believe. Gins will have to be developed to remove the unusual amount of trash.

"If practical, the picker means the development of even larger individual holdings and will sound the death knell of small single family farms. But while it may eliminate hand picking, labor will still be needed to chop cotton and keep it clean—no machines have been made to do that successfully. I believe this picker is more suited to the irrigated cotton lands of Texas than in this section."

Mr. Johnston thinks that the loss of grade in machine picked cotton will amount to about two and a half cents a pound, perhaps more if the staple is stained by the green leaves.

**Opinions Varied**

Other opinions on the picker:

Pat Barcroft, Greenville, Miss.: "I don't want one—it wastes too much cotton and gets too much trash."

E. C. Holmes, farmer, ginner and president of the West Carroll Parish, La., Farm Bureau and parish fair: "If this picker is successful it means socialized farming."

T. D. White, Memphis, manager of farm properties for the Prudential Life Insurance Co.: "The picker works better than the first automobile."

J. R. Buford, Jackson, Miss., manager of pedigred seed division of the Delta and Pine Land Co.: "The picker wastes some, but it may make up the difference by picking the cotton before it deteriorates."

C. M. Price, manager of the L. A. Black farm at Dewitt, Ark.: "It does right well."

J. Vion Papin, statistician, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis: "I am just here to observe and not to express my opinion. This invention might affect the economic situation of this entire district." Mr. Papin was accompanied by G. G. Strickland, of the Memphis branch of the bank.

J. A. May, Lombardy, Miss., planter: "It is a step in the right direction."

J. M. Robertshaw, Greenville planter: "It is a long way from perfection but then I said the radio was impossible."

E. C. Westbrook, cotton specialist, college of agriculture, University of Georgia: "I am reserving my opinion until we have figures on the cost of picking, the waste, the cost of cleaning up the rows after the picker, the results and cost of the ginning, and other factors."

Mr. Rust is confident that the faults of the machine can be eliminated. "The leaves and trash can be ginned out, but I had the machine adjusted today to pick as much cotton as possible and consequently it gets more leaves. We are picking better than 90 per cent of the row and wasting less than five per cent on the ground and the tractor knocks some of that off."

He says that the speed in picking and labor saving will more than compensate for its defects.

"Cotton can be picked before it deteriorates and the improvement in grade for that reason will counterbalance the grade being lowered by trash," he said.

Mr. Rust said that the picker is not for sale, but he has no revolutionary ideas about controlling its operations with any socialized plan.

"The machines will be available for lease for periods of a year or more to anyone who wants one. Our first interest is the cotton picker. We want to make some money and we want it to be of benefit to the cotton farmer. Of course, we are interested in the labor that it displaces, but we cannot tell our lessees what to do with their tenants and laborers—we realize it is none of our business."

At the start of the demonstration, picking was delayed several times while a crew of mechanics from the Rust factory at Memphis made adjustments, but once under way, the picker proceeded without any difficulties.

**Negroes at Work**

As it finished every two of three rows, its 400-pound bag would be emptied in a waiting wagon which was soon filled. In contrast to the clatter of the machine, three negroes bent over cotton rows nearby, paying little attention to an invention that may end back-breaking toil.

Two movie cameramen and a flock of newspaper and magazine cameramen halted operations repeatedly for photographs while the spectators sweltered beneath a broiling Delta sun amid clouds of dust.

The largest delegation to the demonstration was a group of 35 farmers, cotton specialists, ginners, bankers and dealers from Georgia, led by E. C. Westbrook, University of Georgia cotton technologist.

An interested onlooker was C. R. Berry of Greenville, who with his father, the late H. N. Berry, invented a mechanical cotton picker using barbed instead of smooth spindles. Mr. Berry does not think the Rust smooth spindle is practical. "It drops too much cotton," he said.

He said that although nine Berry pickers had been made, the machine was "in a state of suspended animation now."

"We discontinued operations during the depression because we had too much unemployment without a picker," he said. "But we may go ahead now."

A group of negroes from Tuskegee Institute in Alabama watched the picker's operations intently but were skeptical of its results. J. R. Otis, director of the institute's agricultural department, said:

"The machine will have no effect economically or socially on the million negro cotton pickers."

## MECHANICAL COTTON PICKER

Two hundred persons gathered at a Mississippi cotton field on Monday to witness what may prove to be a historic spectacle. A ponderous machine, ten feet high, lumbered over the field and picked cotton with a thousand moistened steel fingers. In about eight hours it picked as much as seventy-five or eighty men and women could have gathered picking by hand for the same period. Its inventors claim it will reduce the harvesting of cotton to one-third or one-fourth of its present cost.

Times
9-2-36
New York N.Y.

The new cotton picker is not perfect. It may prove too expensive for small producers; it requires flat country for efficient operation; the cotton as picked is inferior because the machine picks some bolls not yet matured and some foreign matter. But none of these limitations seems prohibitive, and they may be surmounted within a few years.

If this proves to be so, the machine will produce an economic revolution in this country of the first importance. It would displace, it is believed, most of the 5,000,000 horses and mules of the ten cotton States; in so doing, it might also wipe out a market for the output of an estimated 25,000,000 acres of Western farm land producing their feed. More important, it is estimated that it would eliminate jobs at picking time for 7,000,000 of the 9,000,000 persons who now make up the 2,000,000 tenant families in those States. It would drive these displaced workers, largely Negroes, to the industrial centers.

To concentrate our attention solely on these possibilities would be to regard the perfection of the mechanical picker as a calamity. But this would be to overlook the immense benefits that mechanical improvement brings. No one would wish to cancel ELI WHITNEY'S invention of the cotton gin nearly a century and a half ago. No one regrets the invention of the wheat harvesting and threshing combine, which reduced labor on the operations involved, it has been estimated, about 84 per cent, as compared with the binder and stationary thresher. We do not want to wipe out the whole Industrial Revolution, which has created a hundred jobs for one that it has taken away.

The mechanical picker would begin, it is true, by displacing labor, but it would also greatly reduce costs of production. The RUST brothers assert that when cotton is mechanized from start to finish it can be produced at a profit for less than 5 cents a pound. In the last few years—partly owing to our artificial scarcity under AAA, partly to the ill-advised Government loan policy that held our cotton off the international market, partly to a tendency that would doubtless have continued in any case—the outside world has very substantially increased its growth of cotton. The long-run tendency of this expanded world production must be to keep the price of cotton low. Perhaps only a mechanical picking machine will enable us to meet this lower price level and hold our own.

As the machine will make possible cheaper cotton, so cheaper cotton, in turn, will either encourage the increased consumption of cotton goods, thus benefiting the cotton textile industry, or it will leave consumers with more purchasing power for other goods.

We must not forget that the lowest standard of living, the greatest wretchedness, the greatest single source of child labor in the United States is among the tenant farmers and sharecroppers, mainly Negroes, of the South. Perhaps the greatest single reason for their low standard of living is that hand-picked cotton is uneconomic. Mechanized cotton fields would have fewer workers, but they would be wage laborers, much better off.

This does not mean that the transitional problem created by the displaced workers would not be a grave one. Fortunately, the inventors of the machine appear to be extraordinary men, keenly aware of the social problem their invention may create and eager to mitigate it. They plan to lease their machine, for one thing, only to persons agreeing to certain stipulations regarding minimum wages, maximum hours and child labor.

# New Cotton Picker To Be Given Trial

Advertiser

GREENVILLE, MISS., Oct. 28—(AP)—Another mechanical cotton picker is scheduled to take the field for testing here this week—close to the spot where the Rust brothers invention was demonstrated recently.

10-29-36

E. A. King, representing the Cotton Harvester Company of Pittsburgh, said the new machine was invented in 1924 by the late Hiram N. Berry, and later developed by his son, Charles R. Berry, of Greenville, and L. E. Wirth, of Pittsburgh.

Montgomery, Ala.

When the picker was demonstrated in 1930 and 1932, King said, it was 90 per cent efficient.

He explained a nipple mechanism strips the cotton from the barbed revolving spindles that pluck it from the plant. The outfit is mounted on an auto tractor.

The Rust picker, now being tested near here, at Clarksdale and in Soviet Russia, utilizes moist revolving spindles to pick the cotton.

Agriculture—1936
Improvement of.

Mississippi.

# BELITTLES SHERWOOD EDDY'S INTERRACIAL FARM COLONY

### Commercial-Appeal Points Finger of Scorn At Eddy's Project to Help Sharecroppers—Has Always Favored Landlords.

MEMPHIS, May 7—(ANP)—Dr. Sherwood Eddy's co-operative farm in Mississippi with 22 white and Negro families, now in process of formation upon 2,000 acres of land, is considered a "harmless dream" by the Memphis Commercial Appeal, one of the South's biggest dailies.

Recently Dr. Eddy, following a tour of Arkansas, said the plight of the sharecropper and tenant farmer, most of whom are held in a state of peonage, was "worse than slavery." This co-operative farm is aimed to show that tenant farmers of both races will thrive under decent and humane treatment.

The Memphis daily, however, over-looks repeated charges that the plight of the sharecropper is due to bloodsqueezing tactics of rich landowners conniving with law enforcement agencies and takes the opinion that the tenant farmer is himself responsible by his "shiftlessness and lack of get-up."

Says the Commercial-Appeal:

"Dr. Eddy had no trouble in buying the 2,000 acres necessary for his colony; that is, in finding a seller. He has not paid for it yet. This first step should have caused him to stop and think. He would have reached the conclusion that thousands of other acres in Mississippi and Arkansas are for sale not merely to Dr. Eddy but to sharecroppers, tenants, anybody. Moreover, the most liberal allowances will be made by the sellers, and every inducement made to settle the new tenant upon the land. Mississippi alone, has 2,000,000 acres of tax-forfeited land that may be had almost for the asking.

"There is not a sharecropper in the Mid-South, white or black, who cannot by bestirring himself, create the opportunity that will enable him to buy a home.

"The trouble is that individual effort is not present. What is worse still is that the modern tendency of the political reformer to broaden the activities of the government is curbing that effort. It was not the Civil War that wrecked the South. It was Reconstruction with its false political, social and economic theories fostered by political reformers and imposed upon the people by the government. Amendments to the Constitution, rigid laws, even military rule, were not powerful enough to overturn the natural, age-old, fixed habits and traits which obtained then as they obtain now.

"Reformers make the mistake of charging the deficiencies of the shiftless up to the enterprise of the thrifty. This is why the southern landowners bear the burden of the present wave of socialistic, communistic criticism, when the truth is that there is not a landowner in the South who would not abolish the tenant system tomorrow and go to day labor if he could.

"Dr. Eddy's experiment will give him something to do for a while, and then it will go the way of the New Harmony movement, the Rappites and all the others which existed for a time and then lapsed into the oblivion common to all the efforts which seek to mold perfection out of the avarice, the greed the selfishness, the industry, the hundred and one emotions, habits and customs of humankind. There is one redeeming thing about it—those who go into it, not being called on to put up any money, will emerge no worse off than they are now."

### SHERWOOD EDDY

To The Commercial Appeal:

I have read with interest the lecture and remarks Dr. Sherwood Eddy has made here in Memphis lately regarding his co-operative farm and his plans. His plantation is at Hillhouse, Miss., and he certainly bought it dirt cheap, which shows no one around there wanted it. His soul has been terribly troubled over conditions in Eastern Arkansas, but he goes to Mississippi to start what he feels is a great reform. No

doubt the clay in Mississippi is as good for the right potter as it is in Arkansas. The tenant proposition there just hasn't flared up as it has in the Wonder State.

Dr. Eddy no doubt has taken the right step in turning his finances over to God and the management over to an experienced man. If Dr. Eddy can work out the right plan for financing and show us how to sell our cotton at a profit, that's all we will ask of him. He can't show us a thing about raising cotton. We know all we care to know about raising cotton, but we are weak, awfully weak, on raising mortgages. That's where he can make himself of unlimited worth to the southern planter.

I am not speaking "paregorically" when I say I am white-crested and have waffles of skin under my chin like an elderly hippopotamus. And all these years spent in the farming section of Mississippi, with the past 25 years in the delta, I know the tenant proposition up and down and around on the other side. I also know the planter—know that if you will finance him, sell his cotton for a profit and get him out of the "red" he will gladly take his tenants off the "dole" and pay them money at the end of the year. Yea, he will build them comfortable cabins, build them schoolhouses and churches and pay the salaries of the loudest hollering preachers he can find. He will gladly op and co-op with his tenant, his merchant, his banker and his fellow planters.

I have in mind one planter down there whose financial statement some years ago showed him worth net over $400,000. He has had to give up property here and property yonder until you could buy him today for $25,000 or less. Who got the difference? Not a tenant of his ever starved or went naked; and he did pay some of them money on settlement day.

Dr. Eddy doesn't know the general run of tenants. What we want him to do is to come down here and ride the turn-rows for a few years—earn his keep by the sweat of his brow; and learn from us all about chills and fevers, quinine, Dover's powders and calomel; see one of his tenants get killed by a truck on the highway, his family settle for $700, run straight to the nearest auto dealer and buy two second-hand sedans, an ice box, and drive 12 miles to town every day for 25 pounds of ice, when they could have bought 80 acres of good land with a cottage; learn why a horse gets up from the ground on one end and a cow the opposite end; see the beautiful morning sunrise and the glorious golden sunsets; have his eyelids go down by 8 p.m. like a roller shade without a spring. Then will he be in position to swell his chest if he makes good with his proposition.

It will take courage, physical and moral, to do this. Courage like unto Caesar, hazarding all when he crossed the Rubicon; Columbus setting sail over uncharted seas for the unknown rim of the world; Nelson, at Trafalgar, putting the telescope to his blind eye that he might not see the signal to retreat; courage that keeps an exhausted swimmer battling the waves when he sees a light in the distance. Maybe Dr. Eddy has what it takes.

When he sees the brown cotton bolls splitting along their segments to expose their snowy lint, smells the aroma of new-mown hay and sorghum 'lasses cooking in the vat, hears the whistle of ready gin, then, indeed, will his heart and the hearts of his tenants be as light as the down on a baby chick, if—if—the harvest is abundant and finances O. K.

Our hand, Dr. Eddy! Ring the bell. We're ready for school.

C. S. SMITH.

1227 Jefferson.

### DISCORD AND DR. EDDY

To The Commercial Appeal:

Attention of many cotton planters of the Mississippi Delta has been directed to the Dr. Sherwood Eddy plan of co-operative farming for Mississippi. (A number have had the operative experience without the "co"). Mr. Morris, in his column of April 25 on "Tenant and Landlord," has accurately covered the situation in stating the general relations between landlords, tenants and sharecroppers in cotton states of the south, but he has not been fully informed as to "Christmas money" that has been injudiciously distributed among colored tenants, or sharecroppers, without regard to legal protection. While in some cases it has to be reduced to the status of an involuntary gift, it is not so intended. The tenant is legally obligated to repay this advance in an equivalent, but in many cases this unwise liberality, which is usually extended on the Saturday night before Christmas, reacts in a sad day Sunday, the tenant having made an overnight transfer of residence, leaving no address.

Dr. Eddy has much to add to his plantation curriculum. The Commercial Appeal editorial on Sunday indicates that this "dream" plan of Dr. Eddy's may be harmless, but there are other intimations preying upon cotton planters' minds that Communism may have a nesting place there. We, of Mississippi, are hospitable hosts to all that come embracing and practicing the principles of true Americanism, but we are unalterably opposed to a domicile for any among us not in accord with our tradition of open, honest dealing between landlords, tenants and sharecroppers. Mississippi has been more fortunate than Arkansas. So far, we have had no emissaries of discord among us, and are alert for all offenders.

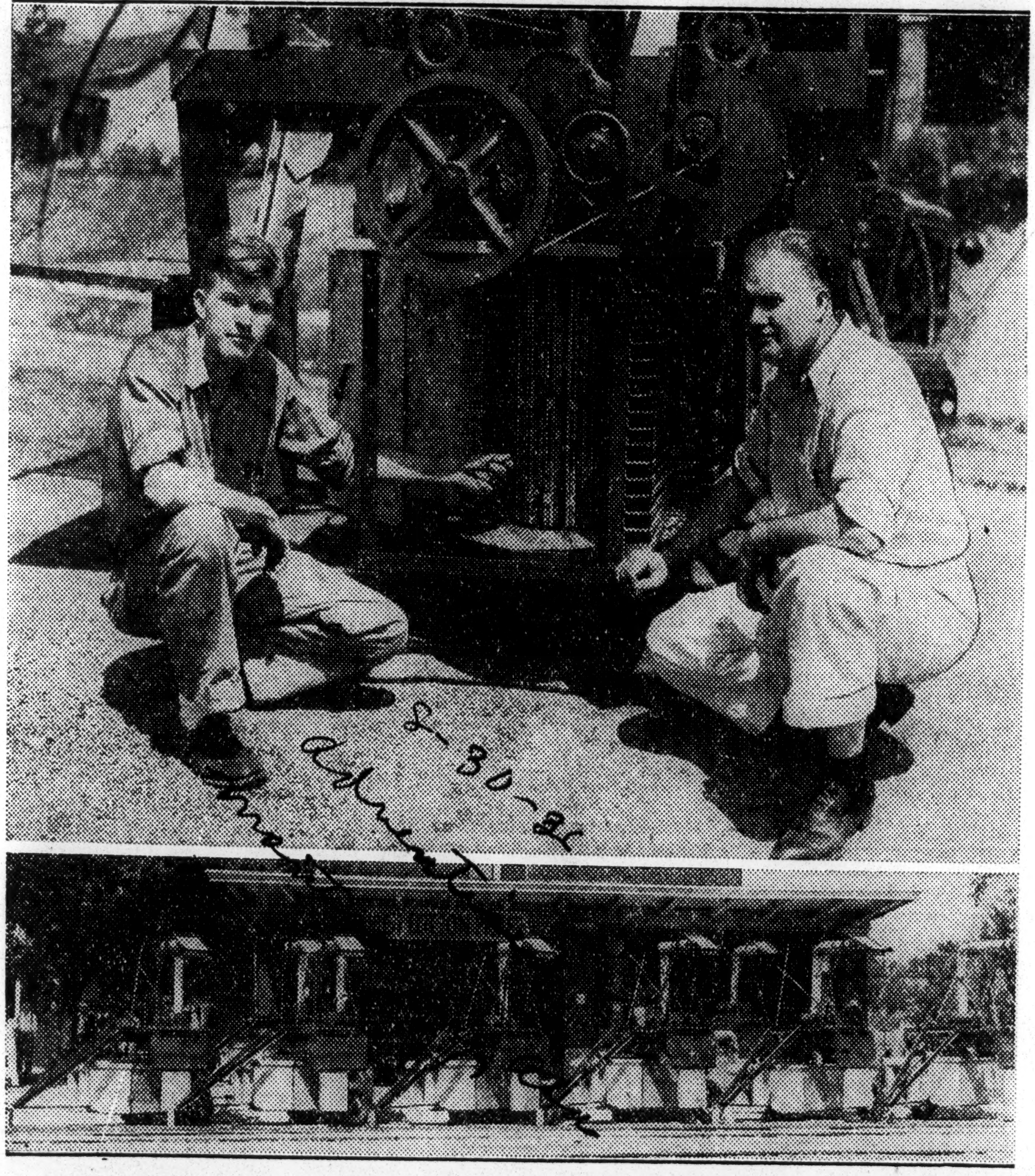
E. H. ANDERSON.

Stover, Miss.

## Eddy's Delta Cooperative Farm Is a Going Concern

SHERWOOD EDDY'S visit to the sharecroppers of Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi (see editorial in The Christian Century, April 8, 1936) has led to the establishment of a large cooperative farm, the first report upon the operation of which has just been received. As stated two months ago, an option was secured upon a tract of over two thousand acres near Hillhouse, Mississippi. The deal was closed, twenty-four families of evicted tenants and sharecroppers are already on the property, and building and agricultural operations are going full-steam ahead. It would be inspiring to quote large sections of Mr. Eddy's communication, or all of it. The main point is that a company of people who were themselves under the harrow, some threatened with violence and all on the verge of starvation, are building a cooperative enterprise which has every promise of giving them a decent living and furnishing the incentive and the opportunity for a rewarding life. There is timber and a saw-mill on the place. Houses are being built, land is being brought under cultivation, a community is being created, and the spirit of mutual helpfulness is flourishing. The last is not the least important, for the essential feature of any cooperative is that its members shall be cooperative. "We refuse to run a charity project," says Mr. Eddy, "or a poor farm for the relief of a few score of families, however desperate their need. We hope to establish in this Delta cooperative farm a new type of life, a cooperative based upon the above principles and tackling these five basic problems (economic, cooperative, technological unemployment, civil liberties, race) in what seems to be the area of deepest need in our whole national life." This is a laboratory of social research, and much more than that. Seven hundred donors have sent Mr. Eddy over $9,000 for this project. He needs at least that much more. 347 Madison avenue, New York.

# Experts Watch Mechanical Cotton Picker Tests Today



The latest attempt to perfect a mechanical cotton-picker will have its opportunity to prove or discredit itself today in a series of exhaustive tests on a plantation near Stoneville, Miss. Experts from all over the South are expected to witness the tests, directed by Mack Rust (upper left) who, with his brother John (upper right) invented the contraption. Mack is shown above explaining the new invention. Below are eight of the "perfected" pickers.

## Snub-Nosed Machine To Roll Over Delta Plantation In First Crucial Try

By FRED WILLIAMS
Associated Press Cotton Reporter

STONEVILLE, MISS., Aug. 29.—(AP)—A snub-nosed machine will roll out on a plantation near here tomorrow and attempt to surmount one of the last bulwarks of manual labor, cotton picking.

Brought to the fertile delta region by its co-inventor, Mack Rust, of Memphis, the cotton picker was expected to draw hundreds of farmers, agricultural leaders and State and governmental officials for its first practical demonstration.

While the picker has received tests in different regions of the belt, the demonstration was expected to prove that it had passed the experimental stage.

The American Cotton Cooperative Association at New Orleans reported that letters have poured in from Bombay, Alexandria, Buenos Aires, Liverpool, Bremen, Havre and other centers where cotton is of prime interest. All want to know if the new cotton picker is going to work successfully.

Economists have hailed the advent of the picker as the most important development for the South since the Yankee schoolmaster, Eli Whitney, found in 1793 that the lint could be separated from the seed by machine.

A successful cotton picker would mark the end of the trail of one of the most persistent attempts to perfect a labor-saving machine.

The small-town mechanic with spare time and an old sulky plow and the engineers of the great farm equipment companies have tried to perfect a machine to snap the lint from the cotton boll.

W. C. Durant of automobile and Wall Street fame was prominent in the field for a while, but subsequently withdrew.

Most of the models worked fine when demonstrated at the county fair grounds or at agricultural exhibits, but when tried on the bumpy soil of a Georgia side hill or the soft dirt of the Mississippi delta they invariably floundered.

Cotton authorities pointed out that a cotton picking machine must have almost human attributes to perform successfully. It has to be able to pass over the green bolls without damaging them and pick the ripe cotton, be able to distinguish between wet and dry cotton, and work on rough ground, side-hills or a Texas prairie.

From an economic standpoint the picker must be cheaply produced. More important it must be simple to operate and replacement parts easily available.

A farmer cannot leave his cotton standing in a Louisiana field and wait a week for new parts to be brought from Atlanta or New Orleans.

The Rust brothers are said to have surmounted most of the obstacles.

Tomorrow their machine will test its worth.

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of.

North Carolina.

# ALL-TIME CORN RECORD NEARLY EQUALLED IN N. C.

Special to Journal and Guide

RALEIGH, N. C.—The Annual Three-To-One Corn Contest, under the direction of S. B. Simmons, superintendent of vocational agriculture in Negro schools of the state, was held on New Years Day at St. Augustine's College.

Booker T. Mills, student at Pitt County School, second place winner last year, took state-wide honors. His production, 99.5 bushels of corn on one acre, is the second highest yield made by a contestant and was only one and one-half bushels short of an all-time record. Robert Jones, of Durham, won first place in the corn show; Thomas Richardson, second and Percy Richardson third. The Richardsons are from Spring Hope. The first prize in the corn contest went to J. L. Moffit.

Thirty-three departments were represented, coming as far West as Gaston County and as far east as Currituck County. There were 1,186 individuals in the contest this year, who produced 53,288 bushels of corn on 1,758 acres at an average cost of 31 cents per bushel, according to Mr. Simmons.

Greensboro, N. C., News
March 30, 1936

# NEGRO AGRICULTURE STUDENTS WILL MEET

## New North State Farmers to Have Ninth Annual Convention At A. and T.

## DATES ARE APRIL 8-10

New North State farmers, a state-wide organization of negro vocational agriculture students, will hold its ninth annual convention at A. and T. college here April 8-10, it was announced yesterday by S. B. Simmons, supervisor of that type of work in the state. He estimated that several hundred students will attend the meeting.

Public speaking, agricultural judging and the conferring of honorary degrees upon members who have done outstanding work will be the main features of the meeting. Too, there will be a mass of business transacted at the meeting. Those who win in the contests here will be given a trip to Hampton, Va., where they will compete for national honors at the second national meeting of the parent organization August 30 through September 2.

All local and state organizations will provide special New Farmer of America programs during the week of April 2. The state organization will conduct a national program in Dudley auditorium at 10 o'clock Friday morning, April 10. At this time addresses will be given by Roy H. Thomas, state director of vocational agriculture, and Elbert Pettiford, president of the state organization.

The purposes of the organization are to create a love of country life, develop the confidence of the farm boy in himself and his work, encourage co-operative and proper recreational activities, develop rural leadership and scholarship among the students and advance vocational agriculture education in all rural high schools. Reports given by local chapters so far indicate the organization is meeting with success in carrying out these objectives, it was stated.

Raleigh, N. C. Observer
April 17, 1936

# SPRING HOPE NEGROES CAPTURE FARM HONORS

Spring Hope, April 16.—For the past four years Spring Hope has been one of the highest ranking teams in the "Negro Superior Farmer" organization. This year it rated third out of 42 teams present at A and T College in Greensboro, Henderson Institute and Columbus County Training School surpassing it.

Special honors went to Spring Hope Negroes as follows: Elbert Pettiford, winner of the Superior Farmer Degree medal, the highest honor given by the national organization; Cecil Mingis, winner of the Modern Farmer Degree medal, the highest degree given by the state organization. Pettiford also won the public speaking contest, taking 3rd place in the finals.

Out of ten boys from this State to take part in the national meeting at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Va. in August, Spring Hope will send three: Elbert Pettiford, Cecil Mingia, and Archie Horton.

Asheboro, N. C. Courier
May 8, 1936

# Three Leading Men Of Negro Race Are Back From A Trip

College Station, Raleigh, May 4.—Three of North Carolina's leading Negro farmers have just returned from a trip to Washington awarded them as a prize for making the best records in corn-growing demonstrations.

They are: Howard L. Mitchell, of Gates county, best all-round record; John L. Tomlinson, of Johnston county, winner of the adult prize; and Robert Lee Jones, of Durham county, winner of the 4-H club prize.

Accompanying them was John W. Mitchell, district Negro farm agent of the State college agricultural extension service, who had charge of the corn-growing contest.

They left Wednesday and remained in Washington through Saturday.

Donors of the prizes were: The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Durham alumni chapter of A. and T. Negro college at Greensboro, and the Chilean Nitrate Corporation.

Salisbury, N. C. Post
July 17, 1936

# Colored Farmers Getting Better Results With Corn

New Bern, July 17—W. P. Williams, Craven county negro farmer, has made such a record in growing corn that his white neighbors are asking him how he does it.

Williams has a corn crop that is growing "so fast you can almost see it grow," said R. E. Jones, Craven county negro farm agent of the State college extension service.

He is one of the negro farmers who are carrying out corn-growing demonstrations over the state with the help of the colored county agents, and is following the recommendations of the extension service.

One of his white neighbors has been planting 20 acres of corn and getting five barrels to the acre. The neighbor found that Williams is getting more from four or five acres than he is from 20.

After consulting Williams about his method of growing corn, he announced that he would try the same method next year, using a good variety of seed, fertilizing well, and cultivating the crop in the most effective way.

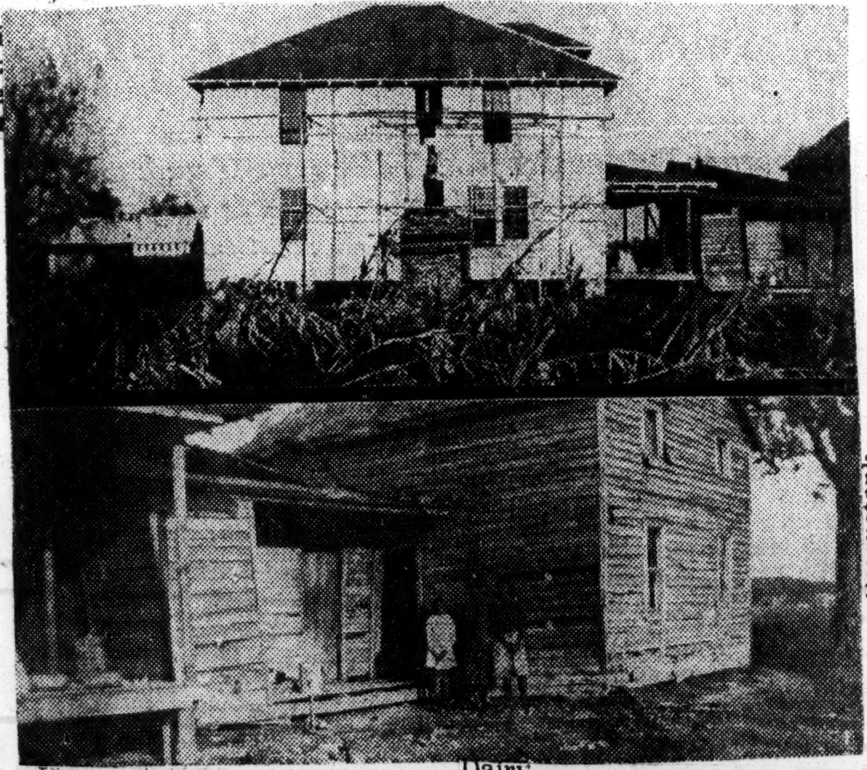
Williams also told that according to his experience, it costs but little more to produce a big yield than a low yield, but there is a lot of difference in the cost of raising 100 barrels of corn on 20 acres and in raising the same amount on five or six acres.

The negro county agent stated that colored farmers over the state are getting exceptionally good results from their corn demonstrations, considering the handicap of dry weather this year.

Last year some of them produced yields of 90 to 100 or more bushels to the acre, while the state average corn yield per acre was only 18 bushels.

Elizabeth City, N. C., Advance
November 16, 1936

# Successful Negro Farmer Building New Home; Agent Cites Him as Fine Example



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E. F. Colson, Negro farm agent, points to Shields as one of the most successful Negro farmers in Pasquotank.

Besides his potatoes and corn, Shields also raised cotton and has some poultry—approximately 50 hens.

Now falling down, the rough home Shields has lived in for 25 years is more than 50 years old, according to his wife, Josephine, who together with eight other children inherited the property on which it stands. The consent of the other heirs was necessary before the new home could be built. Besides the eight rooms, the Shields' home will also have a bath.

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of.

North Carolina.

# ALL-TIME CORN RECORD NEARLY EQUALLED IN N. C.

Journal and Guide

Special to Journal and Guide

RALEIGH, N. C.—The Annual Three-To-One Corn Contest, under the direction of S. B. Simmons, superintendent of vocational agriculture in Negro schools of the state, was held on New Years Day at St. Augustine's College.

Booker T. Mills, student at Pitt County School, second place winner last year, took state-wide honors. His production, 99.5 bushels of corn on one acre, is the second highest yield made by a contestant and was only one and one-half bushels short of an all-time record. Robert Jones, of Durham, won first place in the corn show; Thomas Richardson, second and Percy Richardson third. The Richardsons are from Spring Hope. The first prize in the corn contest went to J. L. Moffit.

Thirty-three departments were represented, coming as far West as Gaston County and as far east as Currituck County. There were 1,186 individuals in the contest this year, who produced 53,288 bushels of corn on 1,758 acres at an average cost of 31 cents per bushel, according to Mr. Simmons.

Greensboro, N. C., News
March 30, 1936

# NEGRO AGRICULTURE STUDENTS WILL MEET

## New North State Farmers to Have Ninth Annual Convention At A. and T.

## DATES ARE APRIL 8-10

New North State farmers, a state-wide organization of negro vocational agriculture students, will hold its ninth annual convention at A. and T. college here April 8-10, it was announced yesterday by S. B. Simmons, supervisor of that type of work in the state. He estimated that several hundred students will attend the meeting.

Public speaking, agricultural judging and the conferring of honorary degrees upon members who have done outstanding work will be the main features of the meeting. Too, there will be a mass of business transacted at the meeting. Those who win in the contests here will be given a trip to Hampton, Va., where they will compete for national honors at the second national meeting of the parent organization August 30 through September 2.

All local and state organizations will provide special New Farmer of America programs during the week of April 2. The state organization will conduct a national program in Dudley auditorium at 10 o'clock Friday morning, April 10. At this time addresses will be given by Roy H. Thomas, state director of vocational agriculture, and Elbert Pettiford, president of the state organization.

The purposes of the organization are to create a love of country life, develop the confidence of the farm boy in himself and his work, encourage co-operative and proper recreational activities, develop rural leadership and scholarship among the students and advance vocational agriculture education in all rural high schools. Reports given by local chapters so far indicate the organization is meeting with success in carrying out these objectives, it was stated.

Raleigh, N. C. Observer
April 17, 1936

# SPRING HOPE NEGROES CAPTURE FARM HONORS

Spring Hope, April 16.—For the past four years Spring Hope has been one of the highest ranking teams in the "Negro Superior Farmer" organization. This year it rated third out of 42 teams present at A and T College in Greensboro. Henderson Institute and Columbus County Training School surpassing it.

Special honors went to Spring Hope Negroes as follows: Elbert Pettiford, winner of the Superior Farmer Degree medal, the highest honor given by the national organization; Cecil Mingis, winner of the Modern Farmer Degree medal, the highest degree given by the state organization. Pettiford also won the public speaking contest, taking 3rd place in the finals.

Out of ten boys from this State to take part in the national meeting at Hampton Institute, Hampton, Va. in August. Spring Hope will send three: Elbert Pettiford, Cecil Mingia, and Archie Horton.

Asheboro, N. C. Courier
May 5, 1936

# Three Leading Men Of Negro Race Are Back From A Trip

College Station, Raleigh, May 4.—Three of North Carolina's leading Negro farmers have just returned from a trip to Washington awarded them as a prize for making the best records in corn-growing demonstrations.

They are: Howard L. Mitchell, of Gates county, best all-round record; John L. Tomlinson, of Johnston county, winner of the adult prize; and Robert Lee Jones, of Durham county, winner of the 4-H club prize.

Accompanying them was John W. Mitchell, district Negro farm agent of the State college agricultural extension service, who had charge of the corn-growing contest.

They left Wednesday and remained in Washington through Saturday.

Donors of the prizes were: The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company, the Durham alumni chapter of A. and T. Negro college at Greensboro, and the Chilean Nitrate Corporation.

Salisbury, N. C. Post
July 17, 1936

# Colored Farmers Getting Better Results With Corn

New Bern, July 17—W. P. Williams, Craven county negro farmer, has made such a record in growing corn that his white neighbors are asking him how he does it.

Williams has a corn crop that is growing "so fast you can almost see it grow," said R. E. Jones, Craven county negro farm agent of the State college extension service.

He is one of the negro farmers who are carrying out corn-growing demonstrations over the state with the help of the colored county agents, and is following the recommendations of the extension service.

One of his white neighbors has been planting 20 acres of corn and getting five barrels to the acre. The neighbor found that Williams is getting more from four or five acres than he is from 20.

After consulting Williams about his method of growing corn, he announced that he would try the same method next year, using a good variety of seed, fertilizing well, and cultivating the crop in the most effective way.

Williams also told that according to his experience, it costs but little more to produce a big yield than a low yield, but there is a lot of difference in the cost of raising 100 barrels of corn on 20 acres and in raising the same amount on five or six acres.

The negro county agent stated that colored farmers over the state are getting exceptionally good results from their corn demonstrations, considering the handicap of dry weather this year.

Last year some of them produced yields of 90 to 100 or more bushels to the acre, while the state average corn yield per acre was only 18 bushels.

Elizabeth City, N. C. Advance
November 16, 1936

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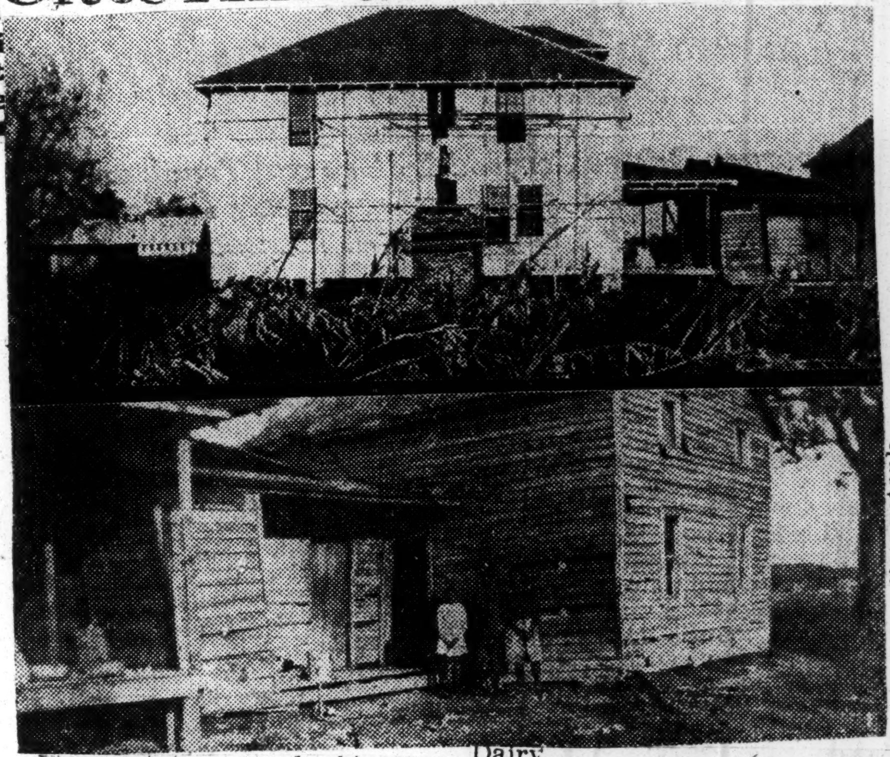

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Besides the eight rooms, the Shields' home will also have a bath.

Washington, N. C. News
December 28, 1936

# Wins State Corn Growing Contest For Negroes 1936

Raleigh.—Producing 101.9 bushels on an acre of land, A. G. Thompson, of Robeson county, won the State corn growing contest for negroes this year.

As State winner, he will be given a free trip to Washington, said C. R. Hudson, of State College, who has charge of extension work with negro farmers.

Second place went to Edward Ballard, of Northampton county, who produced 100.3 bushels of corn on a measured acre of land.

The corn growing contest is conducted annually by the State College extension service to help colored farmers adopt better methods of raising this crop, Hudson said.

Thompson broke his land in January, plowing to a depth of eight inches, and planted his seed, Latham's Double-Eared variety, on April 25. He cultivated the crop three times.

He gave the field a light application of one ton of stable manure, and used 800 pounds of 3-8-3 fertilizer. Just before the corn bunched for tassels, he applied 200 pounds of nitrate of soda. The soil is a sandy loam.

It cost him $21.60 to produce the crop. At $1 a bushel, the corn was valued at $101.90. The stover produced was worth $17, and the soybeans grown with the corn were valued at $8.

The net profit from the field of corn and beans was $105.30.

Ballard used eight tons of manure and 300 pounds of 2-10-4 fertilizer on his red clay soil, with 200 pounds of nitrate of soda for a side dressing. His corn and stover was valued at $105.89, and the production cost was $30.85, leaving a profit of $75.04.

Oklahoma

Agriculture - 1936

Improvement of

# 8000-Acre Farm Shelters 800

Afro-American 12-19-36

IDABEL, Okla. (ANP)—A total of 800 persons representing 150 families are sheltered on the 8,000-acre farm run by George Woods here in the southeastern section of Oklahoma.

Of this land, Mr. Woods owns 3,000 acres and leases 5,000 from absentee landlords.

Some idea of the magnitude of the plantation operations of Mr. Wood was gleaned from his son-in-law, O. M. McDaniels, in charge of the commissary, who said that advances made in groceries from the store totaled annually more than $30,000.

**Work on Halves**

Oliver H. Woods, son, and thirty-one-year-old superintendent of the plantations, said that about thirty-five per cent of the farmers share crop while the remaining sixty-five per cent work on halves.

The Woods's farm operates one gin, which in a large measure pegs the price of cotton in this section. It at least causes the other ginners to be very considerate of the black farmer when he arrives with his bale of cotton.

These men can "figger" at the Woods gin, which makes it possible for them to "figger" at all gins. With all of this, the Woods gin handles about thirty-five per cent of the cotton ginned in this area.

George Woods was in Kansas City recently and purchased a carload of mules for the plantation. Each sharecropper is furnished with two mules, a wagon, cultivator, breaking plow, and middle "buster." A house is furnished with a pump or cistern.

Agriculture — 1936
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South Carolina.

Greenville, S. C. News
May 19, 1936

# Negro Pupil Takes $30 Cotton Prizes

John W. Bates, a pupil in the Simpsonville negro high school, has won $30 as district and state prizes in a cotton contest conducted in South Carolina, it was learned yesterday from his teacher, G. A. Anderson. Bates was high scorer in the district contest, winning $10, and also high scorer in the state, which brought him a prize of $20.

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Tennessee.

ST. LOUIS, MO.
POST DISPATCH

MAR 27 1936

### THE RUST BROTHERS AND THEIR MACHINE.

John and Mack Rust of Memphis, Tenn., have invented a cotton-picking machine which is said to be able to do the work of from 50 to 100 men. Since cotton-picking is one of the most exacting forms of human drudgery, the invention of the Rusts might be hailed as a boon to mankind as was Eli Whitney's cotton gin. Instead, it is regarded with the greatest apprehension, on the ground that, if widely used, it would destroy the economy of the South, releasing millions of laborers, mostly Negroes, whose livelihood is now gained from pick[redacted] and for whom no other employment would exist.

Perhaps this apprehension assumes no greater form than in the minds of the inventors themselves, curious as this may seem. For besides their inventive genius, the Rust brothers are Socialists by conviction and are fully aware of the disastrous effects the use of their machine would have in producing unemployment. Some time ago, in an effort to minimize these effects, the Rust brothers offered marketing control of the machine to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which unfortunately was unable to accept because of lack of funds.

Now the brothers are appealing to the Federal Government for aid in making it possible for their machine to be marketed with the least possible harm to the present setup. They have evolved a plan by which the pickers would be leased to planters who would agree to abide by certain regulations fixing minimum wages and maximum hours, barring child labor and providing for collective bargaining. Violation of the contract would be followed by removal of the machines.

It is one of the wonders of the world that two men who apparently have a large fortune ready for the taking should be so zealous in the interest of their fellow men.

Clarkesville, Tenn., Chronicle
May 7, 1936

## Colored Council Is To Be Formed Here

Organization of county leaders with the purpose in view to develop ways and means of stimulating keener interest on the part of colored farmers and their boys and girls to "make the best better" and to make "better homes on better farms," will be undertaken here Saturday in a negro club leaders' council which will be held in the office of Farm and Home Agents J. R. Branham and M. F. Harlan at 1 p. m., it was announced today.

Leaders for the boys and girls 4-H clubs; chairmen of community adult farm clubs and presidents and secretaries of women's clubs are all "strongly" urged to be present.

The duties of all club leaders will be completely outlined, by the farm and home agents, it was said, and the importance of becoming well trained as club leaders will be stressed.

### THE RUST BROTHERS GO INTO ACTION

Can the cotton South's economy survive under the reign of mechanical cotton picker? We now living will know the answer to that dreadful question before we are gathered to Abraham's bosom.

Will the cotton picker displace thousands of native workers from the "snowy fields of white?" Will "the land of cotton" become a land of memories and bats and owls?

The darker side of the picture includes this view. But the darker side of any picture never depicts the whole truth.

For instance, while machinery may displace cotton pickers, how can it displace cotton planters, cotton choppers and the men who plow cotton?

Naturally cotton picking machinery would be advantageous to extensive growers of cotton because it would hold down their cost of operation. But no cotton grower relishes the prospect of a total disruption of the South's economy on account of labor-saving devices. No civilized cotton grower is willing to ruin his country. Yet human ingenuity will not be denied its day in court. It has never been denied its day in court, it will not begin now.

There must be a practical answer to the question posed by the mechanical cotton picker. For instance, the cotton picker, now about to have its first real test, may fail in the end to convince enough growers that it is feasible. For another instance it may be followed by other discoveries and developments which will offset the invention of the picker.

Be that as it may the Rust brothers of Memphis, of whom we have heard so much, are men with social consciences. They wish to benefit, not to injure.

They have eight pickers ready to go into action on two sides of the earth.

Recently the Associated Press told the following moving tale of the Rust brothers and their picker, which now is ready to go into action:

**Eight mechanical "cotton pickers" stood today in front of a small factory.**

**John and Mack Rust, inventors, exhibited them to friends as the finished products of 10 years' of work—describing them as practical cotton pickers.**

**Within a month, the Rust brothers said, the machines will be eating their way down cotton rows on two opposite sides of the earth, twirling white fibers off the plants and into their metal bowels and spewing cotton from their twisted sleeves as fast as 100 pairs of hands could pick it.**

**No field demonstration was attempted today, as there was no cotton hereabouts ready for picking.**

**The machine has been demonstrated a number of times during the last several years. After each demonstration, the inventors, former Texas boys who once picked cotton themselves and found it "back-breaking" labor, have worked on further improvements.**

**The brothers said that of the eight pickers finally completed and assembled, one is an earlier experimental machine and will not be put into the field. Of the other seven, four will go into operation on the Fargason plantation near Clarksdale, Miss.; one will be used in the fields of Dr. Sherwood Eddy's cooperative farm project at Hillhouse, Miss., and another at the Delta experiment station, Stoneville, Miss. The seventh will tackle fields, yet to be arranged for, near Dallas, Texas.**

**The brothers announced that two others had been sold outright and shipped to Soviet Russia.**

**John Rust will leave this week to aid the Soviet Government in the demonstrations on the collective farms next month.**

**"We've already shown our picker will work," said John Rust. "The new demonstrations will be endurance tests—to see how the machine will stand up under continuous operation under varying conditions."**

**The Rusts said the Soviet Government bought their machine under international contracts calling for royalty payments for any such machines they may produce in the future.**

**To protect displaced labor, the Rusts said, their program calls for an operating company to manufacture the machines, which, in turn, will be controlled by the Rust foundation, supported by that portion of stock and royalty revenues the investors realize. The funds would be used on educational and social welfare projects aimed at relieving dislocated farm labor.**

**The Rusts said they will limit their benefit to salaries as officials not exceeding ten times the amount paid the lowest full-time employe.**

**To prevent exploitation of labor, they said, they propose not to sell the machines outright to this county, but to lease them, beginning at $1,000 for the first year and scaling down to $100 in later years, the operator agreeing to maintain a minimum wage on the machine and to employ no one under 16 years old.**

**"Perhaps we will lease some of the machines this year, but we're not sure," John Rust said.**

**The Rusts were born on a cotton plantation 13 miles southeast of Breckenridge, Stephens County, Texas. With memories of "back-breaking" farm toil, they began their picker experiments in 1927.**

**Their machine consists primarily of an endless belt carrying several hundred smooth wire spindles.**

**"As the machine passes over the row of cotton," said John Rust, "the rotating spindles penetrate the plants. Prior to their entrance into the plants the spindles are automatically moistened. The moisture causes the open cotton to adhere to the rotating spindles and be wrapped around them and pulled from the burr. The cotton is then stripped from the spindles and delivered by suction fan to a container."**

The foregoing story should be of interest to every human being in each of the 11 States that seceded in 1861—indeed it should be of interest to the mortals in those States that did not secede.

If the Rust brothers have found a way to make human cotton pickers idle they have opened up a new field of action for the Federal government and for all taxpayers.

Their machine may fail in practice. Then again it may not.

# Perfected Mechanical Cotton Picker Is Exhibited By Two Rust Brothers

MEMPHIS, TENN., Aug. 11.—(AP)—John and Mack Rust exhibited their "perfected" mechanical cotton pickers today, and announced plans to give them final demonstrations in the fields next month before beginning large-scale production on a plan designed to protect displaced agricultural labor.

The brothers exhibited eight of the machines here—one an experimental model — and announced that two others had been sold outright and shipped to Soviet Russia.

John Rust will leave this week to aid the Soviet Government in the demonstrations on the collective farms in Turkestan next month.

Four machines will be tried on the John Fargason farm near Clarksdale, Miss., and one at the Delta Experiment Station, Stoneville, Miss. Another will be used on Dr. Sherwood Eddy's cooperative farm project at Hillhouse, Miss., and a seventh on a farm near Dallas, Texas, as yet not arranged for.

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# COTTON MEN DISCUSS MECHANICAL PICKER

### One Authority Deprecates Possibility of Economic Revolution.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 1.—(AP)—Cotton men discussed the possibilities of the Rust mechanical cotton picker today but withheld an opinion as to its value until "facts and figures" are evolved in future tests.

The picker, invented by John and Mack Rust, of Memphis, was demonstrated yesterday at Stoneville, Miss., to cotton experts, planters, and ginners.

Dr. Tait Butler, agricultural authority, said he was not worried about the economic and sociological problems that might develop with mechanized cotton picking.

"There will be no social revolution," he said. "The picker will be introduced over a period of years, even if it works. Only the big farms will be able to afford a picker.

"A collectively-owned picker would not work because the joint owners could not agree on who would use it first."

He said the practicability of the Rust machine would depend on cost of operation and the grade of cotton it produces. Government experts will attempt to determine these questions in tests this fall.

Dabney Crump, dealer, said he thought the picker sound in principle, but saw no cause for alarm concerning its possible effect on labor.

C. G. Henry, head of the Mid-South Cotton Co-operative Association, said the machine might work better in the Oklahoma and Texas fields where fields are irrigated and labor is not so plentiful as in this region.

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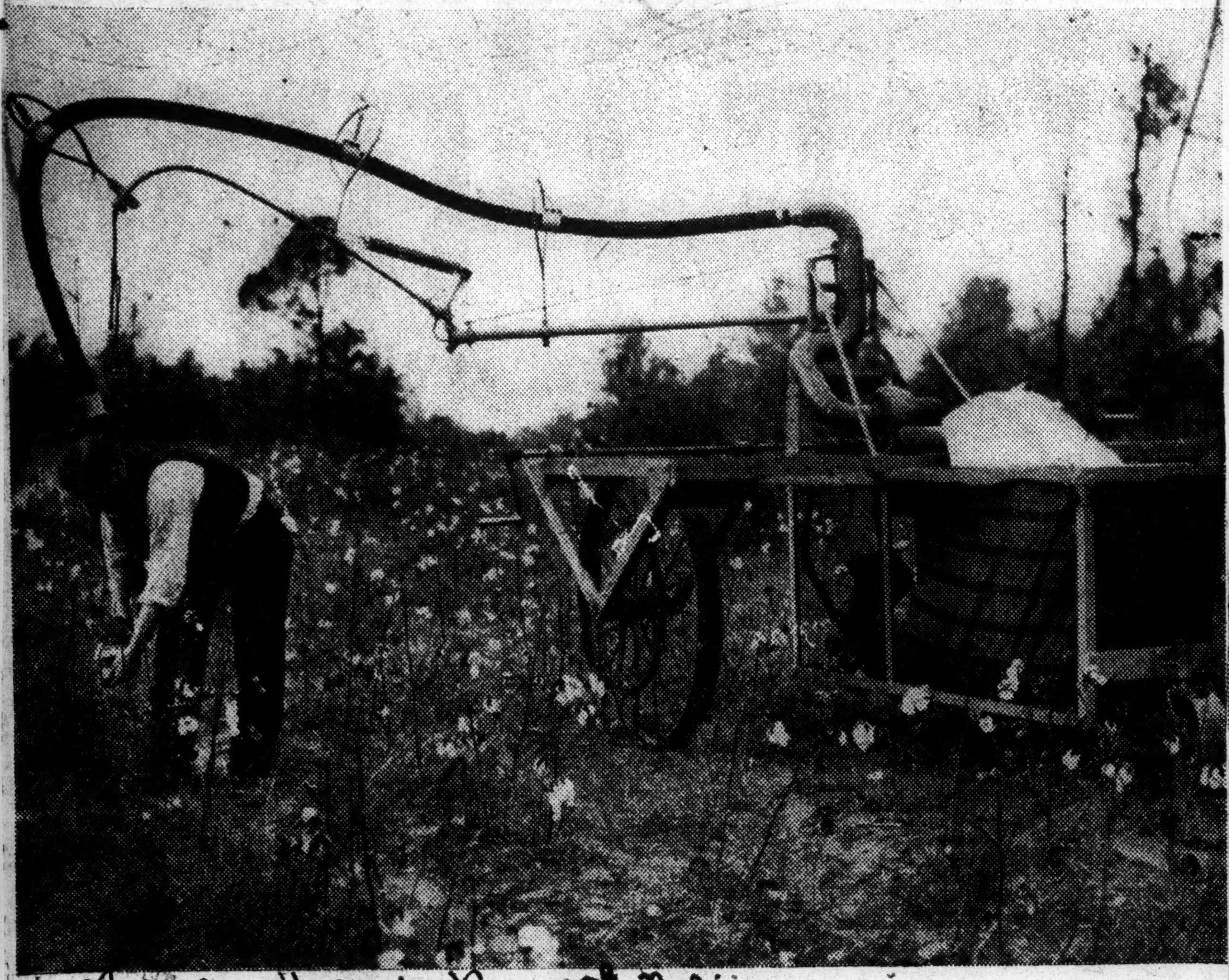
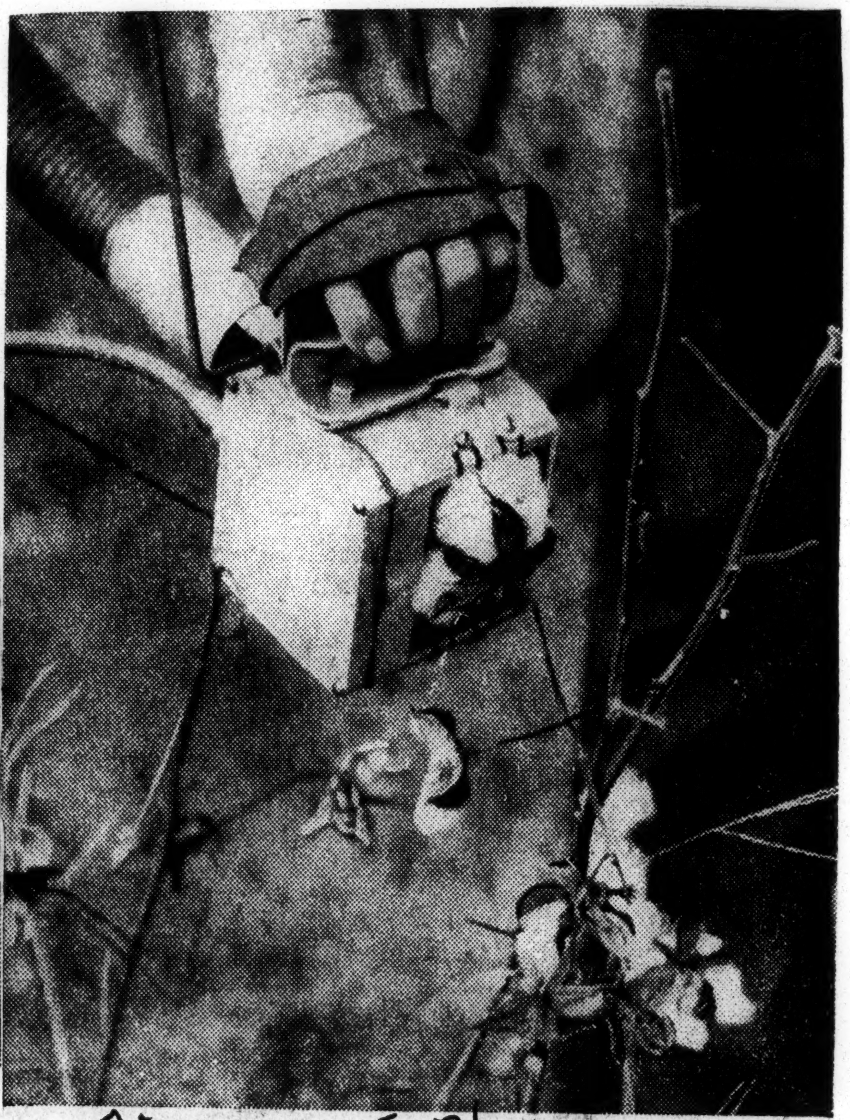
## DEMONSTRATING 'POOR MAN'S MECHANICAL COTTON PICKER'



Times, 11-5-36 New York, N.Y.

Associated Press Photo.

L. C. Stukenborg of Memphis showing how his invention picks the cotton from the boll by a brushing process, after which a vacuum hose carries the cotton into the bag.



Times 11-5-36 New York, N.Y.

Associated Press Photo.

A close-up of the unit that takes the cotton from the boll

# Another Cotton Picker Makes Its Bow

L. C. Stukenborg, upper left, inventor of a new mechanical cotton picker, looks on while Currey Corrington manipulates the device. Below, Mr. Corrington shows a close-up of the picker. Revolving brushes pull the bolls from the stalk, suction whisks it back to the bag. —Staff Photo by Elliott

# MEMPHIAN INVENTS NEW COTTON PICKER

Commercial Appeal

## L. C. Stukenborg Demonstrates His Machine

## TWICE FASTER THAN MAN

11-26-36

### Cost To Grower About $350—Staple Comes Out Cleaner Than When Plucked By Human Hands

Memphis, Tenn.

BY DICK REESE

The Rust Brothers have competition in Memphis in the mechanical cotton picking business from a rival inventor.

L. C. Stukenborg, 279 Angelus, a farmer of mechanical bent, has developed a picker of wholly different design from the Rust machine. It is really a mechanical hand for a human picker.

Two rotating bristles at the end of a long flexible tube brush the cotton from individual bolls, guided by human hands. The cotton is knocked from the brushes by revolving beaters, and is sucked back to a big bag. Most of the dirt and trash are blown out as the cotton strikes a grill above the bag.

**Picks Clean Cotton**

As demonstrated yesterday on Stukenborg's farm between Woodstock and the Shelby Forest, the picker snapped the bolls cleanly from the stalk and the cotton was much cleaner than that picked by hand. But whether it can pick fast enough to justify the cost is a question still undetermined.

Most of the machinery and the cotton bag is mounted on a three-wheeled framework which is pulled to the field by a mule and then moved by hand. A small gasoline motor, three-fourths horsepower, operates the blower and a small generator which turns a fifth horsepower electric motor on the picker head connected with the brushes.

The rubber hose, mounted on a swivel and counter-balanced to relieve the worker of the weight, covers a semi-circle 30 feet in diameter—eight rows can be picked at one time.

With one hand, the worker manipulates the picker; the other hand holds the stalk. Mr. Stukenborg plans to put two hoses and picker heads on each machine to double its capacity.

**Twice As Fast As Man**

Yesterday, the picker gathered the cotton about twice as fast as one man could pick it. Mr. Stukenborg said he had no figures on its capacity in a full stand of cotton, but said that it had picked 20 pounds an hour "scrapping," or going over cotton that had been previously picked, with only one or two bolls to the stalk.

"Anyone can operate it, it doesn't tire the workers like hand picking does, or make their fingers sore. It saves dragging a heavy bag behind them. It can pick in west weather or dry, in hill country and in any type of cotton," Mr. Stukenborg said. "The cost of operation is slight."

Mr. Stukenborg said that he was not offering any stock for sale, and added that the picker would be manufactured by the St. Louis Car Co. Its price would be about $350, he said. "I have received inquiries from the Soviet and Venezuelan governments," he said.

A native of Kentucky, he farmed in Alabama before coming to Memphis in 1914. He said he obtained his first patent on the picker in 1910, and had been working on it ever since, and that he had also patented a hydraulic automobile lift and a boll weevil duster.

**Could Save On Grade**

H. B. Massey, a neighboring farmer watching the demonstration yesterday, said that "I could have saved $10 a bale in grade alone by using that picker."

A. B. Stewart, secretary-treasurer of the Mid-South Cotton Growers, after inspecting samples of cotton picked yesterday by the machine and by hand, estimated that the machine-picked cotton would bring $10 more a bale.

But Dabney Crump, of Anderson Clayton & Co., was not impressed with a description of the machine or the sample of its work. "Modern gin cleaners can clean cotton better than that and I don't believe that a hand-operated picker of that type will pay for itself."

Dr. Tait Butler concurred that "that picker cannot compensate for the cost of the investment and operation—it cannot pick that much more than a hand picker."

Dr. Butler, editor of the Progressive Farmer, is skeptical about all mechanical pickers. About 80 per cent of the cotton is grown on small individual farms. Those farmers are able to pick their own cotton—they cannot buy a mechanical picker. Machines might be profitable on the large farms of the delta and the west."

Texas.

Agriculture-1936
Improvement of.

# TEXAS FINDS NEW USE FOR COTTON

BACK in 1932 a tall, partly bald gentleman looked across a Texas cotton field to where a farmer was having no little trouble getting his mule to walk on top of a row of fast maturing cotton.

Trained by many patient hours of guidance at his master's hands not to step upon the cotton when plowing, the mule was somewhat insistent the farmer was wrong as repeatedly the man pulled him back atop the row.

The farmer was plowing up his cotton and to pull the plow into the growing plants the mule had to walk on the row instead of down his customary path in the middle of the furrow.

Strange was the change in paths to the mule. But strange, too, to the man who watched from the highway the troubles of man and mule was the sight of a Texas farmer plowing up rows of cotton he had battled flooding rains, dry winds and boll weevils to grow.

This man was Gib Gilchrist, state highway engineer of Texas.

A better way, reasoned Mr. Gilchrist, to meet the economic problem of too much cotton was to find more uses for the staple.

And from the sight of beautiful, growing cotton falling under a plow on a hot July's day in 1932 was born an idea that has created another use for cotton which in future years may require consumption of a sizable number of bales.

**Cotton Mats More Efficient**

Back in his office in Austin, Mr. Gilchrist began to think of a way the Texas highway department might bring about a new use for cotton. He hit upon the idea of using cotton mats instead of imported burlap in the curing of concrete pavement. He set his aides to work under the direction of Henry C. Porter, state highway research engineer, to get the mats made and start experiments on their use.

Out of this research and experiment work, Texas has developed a cotton mat for curing of concrete pavement that has proven highly successful and more efficient than the older methods of covering newly laid concrete with wet burlap, wet earth and ponded water to cure it.

On a number of Texas highway projects these wet cotton mats have become the method of curing concrete and no longer is the process considered in the experimental stage by the Texas highway department.

When it started its experiments with cotton mats, the department had them made in three thicknesses—one, two and three inches. Some of the mats were sent in January, 1933, to the United States Bureau of Public Roads for tests and others were kept for the rigid testing and research processes the Texas highway department puts all materials through that go into its roads.

First tests were given them for efficiency.

From the Bureau of Public Roads, as from the experiments of the Texas department, came reports declaring the mats an efficient material for curing concrete.

Efficiency proven, then came tests on their economic worth.

**Outlasted Burlap on Tests**

Compared with imported burlap, which earlier had been wet and used for curing, the cotton mats were used 21 times and remained in good condition, while under the best circumstances 15 to 20 applications was the life of the burlap mats.

Comparing concrete cured with cotton mats to that cured with ponded water, which long had been considered the most efficient process, the department found that on a project cured with the cotton mats, where four bags of cement to the yard had been used, concrete was stronger than on a project cured with ponded water where four and a half bags of cement were used.

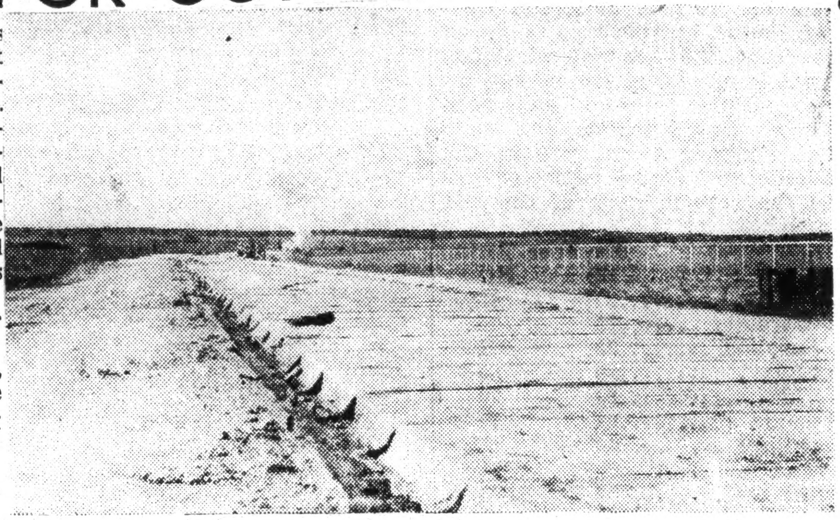
The reason for this, Mr. Porter explains, is that the wet cotton mats give more curing protection to concrete at its most crucial time—just after it is laid.

The cotton mats with which the highway department has carried on its experimentations have been used a maximum of 58 times on six projects in different sections of the state and are still in serviceable condition.

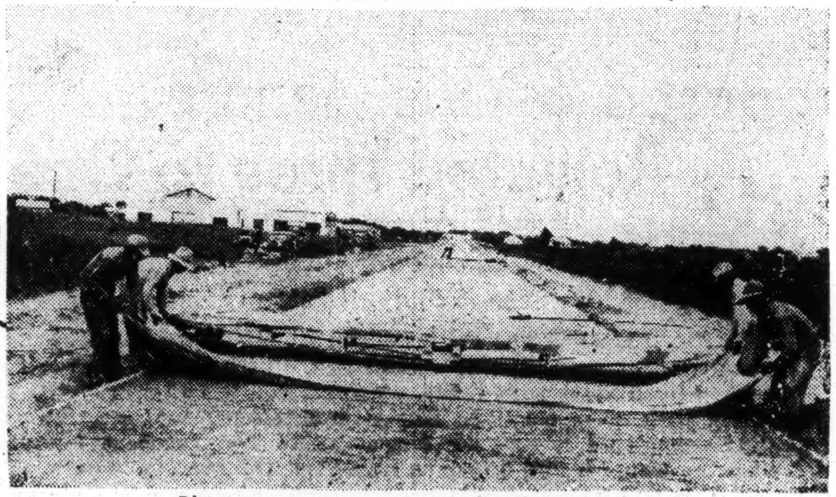
Kept wet for 352 days, the cotton mats used on these projects have proven their strength by still being in condition for further use.

If used in large quantities, cotton mats cost less than the old methods of curing, not considering the saving in cement costs resulting from the decrease in the amount of cement necessary to acquire specified strength of pavement their use in curing concrete permits.

While the Texas Highway Department has gathered no data on the number of bales of cotton that might be used in making mats, engineers are confident that a large amount will be consumed especially if other states adopt this method



Curing cotton pavement with cotton mats.



Placing cotton mats on fresh concrete.

of curing concrete.

In addition to the prospective use on highway projects, Mr. Porter believes the work of Texas with cotton mats in time will bring about their usage as methods of curing concrete sidewalks, floors, etc.

Further proof of the worth of the pioneering work of the Texas highway department is the fact that Congress has appropriated $1,300,000 to encourage the use of cotton mats for curing concrete roads. This money is to be handled by the Federal Bureau of Public Roads through the different state highway departments.

The bureau has sent circular letters to the state highway departments asking the states to make requests for their pro rata parts of the cotton mats to be made. Eighty thousand mats are to be turned out of the appropriation.

Texas has made a request for 20,000 of them, but if other states are as interested as in Texas, highway department officials are doubtful the state may obtain such a large share.

The mats are 22 feet long and are five and one-half feet wide. As concrete is laid, they are wet and spread over it for the specified time necessary for curing the pavement.

So, a part of the fine concrete highways over which Centennial visitors to Texas will ride this year are those which have been cured by a process which grew out of Mr. Gilchrist's desire to find a better use for surplus cotton than plowing it under at government expense.

These roads are included in some of the main arteries over which Centennial traffic in Texas this year will travel and upon which the Texas highway department has devoted extensive efforts to insure safe, comfortable and convenient travel.

From every main entrance of the state to the site of the Central Exposition at Dallas and to the principal cities and points of interest in Texas, the highway department has devoted an especial effort this year to getting its roads ready for the Centennial.

Agriculture - 1936
Improvement of.

Virginia

GROWING ONIONS

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

The state of Virginia produces great quantities of onions for the market. Accomac county for 10 years, 1920 to 1929 inclusive, planted an average of 863 acres a year from which they shipped an average of 184,000 bushels each year or 213 bushels per acre. In order to determine the most economical method of growing this crop the Truckers Experiment Station at Norfolk conducted an intensive experiment for a number of years with the following results:

They found that onions grew better and are more perfect on a sandy soil that was well supplied with vegetable matter and in good physical condition.

Macon Telegraph

The most satisfactory results were obtained from the use of commercial fertilizer, goods carrying 6 per cent phosphoric acid, 7 per cent of ammonia and 6 per cent potash applied at the rate of 1,000 pounds per acre broadcast before the sets were planted. In one test the fertilizer was put in as a side dressing about April 1 and from that method they only gathered 90 bushels per acre as against 241 bushels where the broadcasting method was used

Macon, Ga.
1-23-36

They advise buying sets that are from half an inch to one inch in diameter as the larger sets have a tendency to produce too many seed stalks and the very small ones do not produce desirable bulbs, as they don't attain proper size to grade U. S. No. 1.

They advise planting in rows 25 to 30 inches apart and spacing the sets about four inches apart in the drill.

They advise that this work start about April 1. The first working should be deep and thorough. After that they should be worked once a week or as soon after each rain as possible, but this work should be very shallow, as the roots spread out from 8 to 12 inches then bend down and penetrate to a depth of 18 to 24 inches. You can readily see from this that shallow cultivation is necessary. I have thought for many years that onions could be grown successfully in Middle Georgia and I have not changed my opinion. We have the soil and climate that I am sure with proper fertilization will grow this crop successfully.

One trouble is getting onions to keep. In my opinion this can be done by feeding them a balanced ration; that is, the proper amount of phosphoric acid, ammonia and potash. In the experiment quoted above it would seem that a goods carrying 6 per cent phosphoric acid, 7 per cent ammonia and 5 per cent potash is a balanced ration.

They plant their sets as early in February as weather conditions will permit and they are ready to gather in latter part of June and first of July.

123 Lawton Ave. T. J. BUTLER.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

# TENANTS COMING INTO FARM BUREAU

Advertiser

## Enrollment Of Sharecroppers To Unprecedented Degree Reported Here

1-1-36

Sharecroppers are helping to swell the membership of the Montgomery County Farm Bureau to record numbers for 1936, Lem A. Edmonson, farm agent, announced yesterday. Greater emphasis is being placed this year on enrolling tenants in the bureau than ever before, because of the benefits each farmer, whether he be landowner or a sharecropper, received under the new AAA program, Mr. Edmonson said. He said that more than 100 tenants had joined the farm organization during the past two days, bringing to an all-time high the enrollment for 1936.

The membership for the new year stood at the close of the old year at approximately 750, which was the objective of the bureau when the membership drive was launched in the late Fall. Since great number of the tenants are enlisting along with landlords, Mr. Edmonson predicted the 1936 membership would reach 1,000.

In many instances, he disclosed, the landlords were paying the two-dollar a year dues for their tenants. One of the first farmers to assist his tenants in becoming active members of the organization was T. J. Gray, of Beat 12, one of the largest landowners in the county. Mr. Gray, it was said, had pledged 75 of his tenants as farm bureau members this year.

A great majority of the sharecroppers who are joining the farm organization are negroes, Mr. Edmonson said. Interest among the negro farmers in enlisting in the farm bureau gained impetus during a recent county-wide tour by the farm agent, when he addressed gatherings on the AAA program. To promote this new program, he invited all farmers to become members, pointing out that the tenant really receives as much, if not more, benefit from the AAA than the landlord.

Mr. Edmonson also stated that a great many business men of the city who had agricultural interests were also joining the farm bureau. He said that local business had nothing in conflict with the AAA, but, on the contrary, was cooperating with the New Deal program for agriculture.

It would be only a short time, the farm agent stated, before the sign-up campaign started for the 1936 crop production program.

# Ala. Cropper, in Bandages, Tells of AAA Abuses

Afro-American

## Says U.S. Official Saw Him Beaten Up by County Sheriffs.

4-4-36

Baltimore, Md.

## WHITES TELL OF LYNCH MENACE

## New Deal Group Gets Robbery Charges.

By F. M. COLLINS

With the crown of his head bandaged and his hand wrapped with gauze, a 70-year-old Alabama sharecropper told government officials in Washington, last week-end, of some of the horrors practiced upon farm workers under the defunct AAA.

His name could not be revealed for fear of reprisals from "the white folks" when he goes back home.

**He told his story at a conference held in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Building between sharecroppers and tenant farmers of both races, and officials of the Agriculaure Department and various New Deal Agencies.**

The witness described how he was robbed of his farm equipment and his share of government benefits, beaten by county sheriffs, and evicted from his property, while an AAA official looked on.

**Worked 2 Months for $2.40**

He told of working sixty-six days on an RRA project for one payment of $2.40 and two small food orders for a family of ten; of having to pay his landlord by arduous tasks for the equipment which he had already earned from the government, and of having his steer taken from him by landowners and government officials.

**Howard Kester, tenant farm organizer, and Tom Burton, both white, who have barely escaped lynchings for trying to organize the colored and white sharecroppers, and R. B. McKenney, another organizer, also testified.**

They denounced, in strong language, current government legislation and policies, and landowners' tactics in suppressing the needy farm workers.

**Worse Than Slavery**

W C Irby, white, union secretary from Alabama, testified that conditions worse than when slavery existed in the South.

"The small landowner is bad off enough," he said, "the tenant farmer is worse, and the colored farmer is worse off than the other two."

He gave a doleful, but somewhat encouraging picture of bravery and heroism in organizational effort, and said that though union men were beaten and murdered, the union was growing by 200 members a month.

**Agents Get Harsh Names**

Burton's words of "robbers and thieves" in referring to government agents, were ordered stricken from the record by Gardiner Jackson, white, chairman of the National Committee on Rural Social Planning, who conducted the conference.

In the midst of his fiery talk, a white woman jumped to the floor crying out:

**"That's a lie. I resent those Alabama officials being called robbers and thieves. They are my friends. They are fine gentlemen. I am from Bullock County, Ala., and I know that no one has starved down there. They can't starve in that black land. They can grow gardens or something."**

Burton waited quietly until the woman, who gave her name as Mrs. Clifford Durr, stopped speaking, then, waving documents which he said were proofs, began to cite instances of "robbery" by government officials when they charged sharecroppers for equipment and food which they did not receive.

**Check Forgeries Charged**

Various speakers testified to such atrocities as postmasters' receiving sharecroppers' AAA checks, and turning them over to landlords, who allegedly forged the sharecroppers' names and cashed the checks.

New Deal officials were severely quizzed by the committee, of which John P. Davis is a member concerning what the Federal Government could do to stop local officials from committing the alleged crimes against the farm tenants.

Most of them answered vaguely stating that they had no jurisdiction over local affairs.

**That some 200 or more colored families in one county alone were recently evicted from their homes, was brought out.**

Secretary of Agriculture Wallace welcomed the delegates in a brief talk.

He said the administration of farm labor conditions was one of the country's greatest problems and that a considerable step forward would come by the passage of the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Bill.

# Negro Croppers Get Death Threat For Baring Fraud

Daily Worker

DADEVILLE, Ala., May 24.—**Fab Caldwell, Negro sharecropper threatened with death for revealing to an AAA investigator that his landlord had kept his parity check, was found safe after hiding for more than three weeks. Woodson Walker, Caldwell's landlord, who lives near Waverly in Lee County, sent a car load of thugs after him but he escaped and went into hiding.**

5-25-36

Howard Gray, another Waverly landlord, is offering $100 reward for information on who reported him to the AAA for keeping his sharecroppers' parity checks.

This terror against the sharecroppers explains why more individuals have not reported violations of AAA contracts to the officials and why they have to do it through a union.

New York, N.Y.

The Share Croppers Union urges all friends of justice to write Secretary Wallace demanding that Fab Caldwell be guaranteed protection when he returns to his home. Caldwell has a wife and five children. Similar letters should be sent to Governor Bibb Graves at Montgomery, Ala., and to the High Sheriff at Opelika, Alabama.

# FUTRELL WELCOEMS FARM LABOR INQURY

Commercial Appeal

## Claims East Arkansas Conditions Misrepresented

6-21-36

## IMMUNITY IS GUARANTEED

Memphis, Tenn.

### Claims Professional Agitators Give Out False Publicity—Will Protect Any Who Will Hear Both Sides

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, June 20.—Gov. J. M. Futrell today issued a formal statement alleging conditions in East Arkansas' sharecropper belt had been misrepresented and charging "agitators are making money by their propaganda in trying to stir up trouble" in the area.

"I predict that nothing shocking or startling will develop from the investigation now being made by the Department of Justice," he said. "The truth will come to light. As governor of Arkansas, I welcome any fair and impartial investigation of each and every alleged wrong and outrage. At my request, the officers of each county will use troops to protect the rights of any people who may come here on any legal purpose and who are willing to abide by the law while they stay here.

**Guarantees Immunity**

"Therefore, I guarantee absolute immunity from any harm to any person who will come here and make an investigation and hear both sides of the case and report the facts as they find them."

The executive statement made no direct reference to claims of the Rev. Claude C. Williams, Little Rock, and Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis, that they had been beaten near Earle, Ark., by six men with a piece of harness when they went there to make inquiries about a negro sharecropper reported by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union to have been fatally beaten.

Sheriff Howard Curli nof Crittenden County subsequently said an investigation failed to bear out the

report of the fatal beating. Sam E. Whitaker, special assistant to the U. S. attorney general, yesterday questioned Mr. Williams and Miss Blagden in Memphis about their claims, but made no announcement.

Asserting that "95 per cent of what is being said through the press about the mistreatment of people in Arkansas is false propaganda," Governor Futrell's statement asserted:

"The agitators are making money by their propaganda in trying to stir up trouble. These agitators will do anything to gain their point in the way of publicity. They will resort to mock funerals.

"Why don't the people who are putting up the money for these agitators devote that money for the purpose of sending some pople into Arkansas to investigate the facts? The facts are what the agitators do not want the public to know. They are afraid of the facts. The facts, when once known and believed by the public, will end their activities in Arkansas."

**Indorses Pastor's Letter**

The governor said he desired to "indorse every word" of a letter wkritten by the Rev. A. R. Adams of Marianna, Ark., to The Commercial Appeal, in which Mr. Adams charged that Norman Thomas, the Socialist presidential nominee seems to be doing his level best to create the impression abroad that thereis a 'reign of terror' in the Wonder State.' Mr. Adams said investigation would be welcomed "into the activities of alien agitators, who are sowig incedniary literature throughout the south and stirring up class aand race hatred."

"Thereis no place to be found where there are not some mean jeajle, who defy the code of right as between man and man," said the governor. "'We have people in every place who will cheat and defraud and take every advantage of ignorance. Arkansas is no exception in this respect.

"Ninety-nine per cent of the people in Arkansas will tell you that both person and property are as secure here as anywhere. They are satisfied so far as legal p rotection goes.

The Department of Justice has twice sent a special agent here for the purpose of making an investigation. I know the substance of the first report. Practically all that was found was that 12 negroes had been too severely punished. Clemency waas recommended for those and they were promptly released by order of the governor . . .

"It is said that the agents sent here by the government hve whitewaahed the situation. Investigations have been made by the authorities of this state, but the agitators still yell whitewash."

# Arkansas, The Victim Of Tenancy

Advertiser 6-28-36 Montgomery, Ala.

The acuteness of the share-cropper situation is being placed solidly before the nation today. As the strike of Arkansas croppers continues with desperate steadfastness day after day and slowly gains more notice in the press, the country is becoming aware that some solution must be found to the problem raised by the tenancy system if Southern agriculture is to be saved from total collapse.

Although various students of the farming situation have placed all the blame for the ills which plague cotton growing upon the heads of large plantation owners, the situation in Arkansas not only upholds the tenants; in addition, it defends the planters.

It is true that in sections of the cotton belt share-croppers have suffered the worst forms of exploitation at the hands of landlords. The cropper, to get any work, has been forced to accept yellow-dog contracts at average wages of 75 cents for a 10-hour day. Even this they owe in advance for rent, food and clothing so that many of them never handle a coin from end of one year to the next. Their pitiable existence is characterized by the shanties in which they live, the corn pone and side meat which they eat, the inadequate clothing which fails to keep their bodies warm in Winter and the absolute lack of any educational opportunities.

* * * *

Starved into desperation, many share-croppers have found that they can retreat no further. They have begun to organize in an effort to climb out of the last ditch. Negroes and whites together have forgot the urge to hate in the urge to live and have joined the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. And the planters have tried to shatter the union by instituting a system of terror by eviction. This action on the part of farm owners has brought down the united wrath of so-called liberals and humanists the nation over.

What this group evidently fails to realize, however, is that the situation would not be nearly so grim a deadlock if it were not for the fact that the planters are in their own way as desperate as the croppers. The facts are that in cotton the margin of profits is so thin that if demands of the croppers for 75 cents a day raise in pay were acceded to the higher wages might narrow the margin down to nothing. So, it is readily seen, the planters are receiving the same maltreatment under the tenancy system as are the croppers.

Cotton, it has been truthfully said, is the sick man of the South. It may have been a king once, the Nation recently pointed out in an article on peonage under the share-cropper system, but like all kings who feel their power slipping it has become a tyrant. This accounts for the brutality which has marked the Arkansas planters' effort to break the strike.

In the unlikely event that the share-croppers should win their pay increase, that would be but a temporary solution. The roots of the problem go deeper than the question of wages; they reach down to the fundamental cause—a cause which most Southerners fail to recognize—the bankruptcy of cotton farming. Unless a program of breaking up of large-scale, single-crop holdings into individual farms is adopted, no stop-gap remedy will save Southern farming.

* * * *

The Federal Government must be allowed to put such a program into practice. It would be utter folly for any other agency to undertake to institute and carry out such a large-scale program. Congress had for consideration during its recently concluded session a measure designed to place capable farm hands on individually owned and operated tracts. The measure called for the establishment of a Farmers' Home Corporation with a capital stock of $50,000,000 from the treasury and a borrowing power of $1,000,000,000. This money would be used to purchase farm land from banks, mortgage companies and individuals and make it possible for croppers to secure small tracts. However, Congress adjourned without taking any definite action on the bill.

Now, at the start of another election year, is the time for everyone interested in the welfare of Southern agriculture to demand that candidates take some definite stand on the question of farm tenancy. Unless Congress does something to cure the ills which tenancy has brought, viciousness of the system will slowly sap the strength of the entire social and economic structure of the South.—The North Georgia Journal.

# TO INVESTIGATE SHARECROPPERS AND OWNERS FEUD

Courier 10-31-36 Pittsburgh, Pa.

**LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Oct. 29—(ANP)—Arkansas' State legislature will be asked to investigate charges of violence and lawlessness between plantation owners and sharecroppers at the next meeting of the general assembly in January.**

Five members of Retiring Gov. J. M. Futrell's State Farm Tenancy commission were designated to ask the legislature to make the inquiry following a three hour session of the Program committee of the commission. This committee, charged with perfecting a program to deal with the sharecropper problem, divided the work of the commission into four major classifications.

Sub-committees were named to draft a resolution from the committee which indorsed without specifically mentioning the principles of the Bankhead-Jones tenant bill. Afterwards committee members explained the bill has not been mentioned by name because of prospective amendment at the next congress.

The adopted report of the subcommittee read: "Resolved, That suitable farm lands be made available by the United States and the several States for purchase by tenants or non-owner farmers upon terms which may be met by any reasonably good and industrious farmer from the produce of the land."

Alabama

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

# Alabama Farmers and Sharecroppers Push Plan for One Organization

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Nov. 22.—Unity is the order of the day for the oppressed in the South.

Unity of Negro and white sharecroppers and farmers.

Unity of the two fighting organizations they have, the Alabama Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union.

Unity of the farm tenants and laborers with the workers in industry and with the striking seamen on the Gulf Coast.

A donation of the first 58 sacks of union label sweet potatoes produced in the South went recently to the striking seamen and longshoremen in New Orleans. Each sack had the seal of the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union of America, full name of the Farmers Union, with a picture of a plow, a rake and a hoe, and the words: "Grown by Union Farmers."

### AGREE ON TERMS

Committees from the Alabama Farmers' Union and Sharecroppers Union reached an agreement to combine the two organizations at the convention of the A. F. U. held in this city on Oct. 29-30. The convention adopted the proposal, and it was held certain to pass the next executive board meeting of the Sharecroppers Union.

The combination will be based on the following resolution and program of action, proposed to the Farmers' Union convention by the Sharecroppers Union, and adopted by the convention.

"The Alabama Division, Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union of America, will strive with all its power to secure:

1.—The right of sharecroppers and tenant farmers to gin and sell their own cotton.

2.—The fight of day laborers, sharecroppers and tenant farmers to cash crop advances; the right to trade where they please, and for abolition of the commissary store system.

### HIGH WAGES

3.—The right to check and inspect accounts between landlord and sharecropper or tenant by his or their chosen representatives.

4.—The right of sharecroppers and tenants to government relief without the necessity of the landlord's authorization.

5.—Higher wages for farm workers and abolition of the Southern Wage Differential.

6.—Abolition of the poll tax (In Alabama the poll tax deprives two-thirds of the adult population of voting rights.)

7.—Federal support of education, free text books, better buildings, adequate transportation facilities, and free hot lunches.

8.—An end to violence against union members, prosecution by State and Federal authorities of those who violate our civil and constitutional rights, and the right to organize, meet, strike, picket and bargain collectively.

### HITS DISCRIMINATION

9.—Cancellation of unjust debts. Protection of stock, tools, and other property of share croppers and tenants against seizure for debt.

10. — No discrimination against colored farmers on these proposals.

The convention highly approved of the speech by Clyde Johnson, secretary treasurer of the Sharecroppers Union and his urging of a united campaign to organize all Alabama farmers.

A further move in the direction of unity of farm and industrial labor came with the speech to the convention by E. Z. Yeager, vice-president of the Alabama Federation of Labor. Yeager urged full cooperation of workers and farmers, and widespread organization of farmers.

"The sharecropper or tenant farmer is like a banana on a bunch," said Yeager. "When he leaves the bunch he gets the devil skinned out of him."

### OPPOSE SETTLEMENT

The Sharecroppers Union is backing the fight of Farmers Union members against one of the Federal Resettlement Administration's pet schemes to "rehabilitate" fifteen farm families at the expense of twenty others. The incident took place at the St. Landry government project farm near Opelousas, La.

The twenty farmers, were ordered to leave the place by Dec. 1, when they can not get other good farms, and when they would have to abandon their gardens, already planted and not maturing until spring. A hot protest by the farmers affected has been sent to Assistant Secretary of Agriculture R. G. Tugwell.

One tenant farmer, with thirteen children, had just spent about $30 to buy wire to fence in his garden. Under the laws of this State, the wire fence is now "attached to the soil" and he can not even take it with him to use on his next farm

## 700,000 Farmers Face Loss of All Federal Relief Dec. 15

**WASHINGTON, Nov. 22.—Federal aid, now being given a million farmers, drouth victims, will be cut off from 700,000 of them soon, the two government agencies concerned made known here today.**

**The WPA is now giving relief jobs to 324,265, and will cut the jobs down to 60,000 by Dec. 15. The Resettlement Administration will try to hold its load down to 240,000. Whole counties will be slashed off the federal aid list. Wisconsin, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, South and North Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska and Kentucky are the States which will suffer most.**

Agriculture - 1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# TENANT UNIONS FEAR 'TROUBLE' AT GATHERINGS

Post

## New Tenseness Followed By Request For Protection At Memphis

9-25-36

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MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 25.—The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union moved quickly today to capitalize upon recognition afforded by Federal grand jury indictment at Little Rock of an Eastern Arkansas deputy sheriff on peonage charges and by the Arkansas Tenancy Commission meeting at Hot Springs.

Birmingham, Alabama

Union Executive Secretary H. L. Mitchell appealed from union headquarters here to Gov. J. M. Futrell of Arkansas for "protection" during a series of union meetings today and tomorrow as tenseness renewed throughout the troubled Arkansas delta cottonfield area due to renewed union activities.

Mitchell acted while Federal Dist. Atty. Fred A. Isrig made plans to prosecute Deputy Sheriff P. D. Peacher, of Earle, Ark., on peonage charges returned in an indictment by the Arkansas Federal Grand Jury at Little Rock yesterday.

The indictment, returned shortly after the jury heard testimony from 14 witnesses and Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, charged Peacher specifically with "aiding and abetting to the return of slavery."

Peacher, the indictment alleges, falsely charged eight Negro farm hands with vagrancy and brought them before Mayor T. S. Mitchell, justice of peace at Earle. They were "illegally convicted and sentenced to work on Peacher's farm for his own use and benefit," said Richard P. Shanahan, FBI investigator.

The Negroes were sentenced to pay a fine of $25 or serve 30 days, it was brought out, and they accepted the sentence because they had insufficient funds. They were pardoned after 20 days by Governor Futrell, just after the latter had received a report from FBI Agent Sam Whittaker, Chattanooga, Tenn., who made a preliminary peonage study of conditions at Earle.

# OFFER PLAN TO END SERFDOM, PEONAGE

MEMPHIS, Sept. 24—(ANP)—In a 26-page document on cotton field labor conditions, the interracial Southern Tenant Farmers' Union pleaded for abolition of the entire sharecropper system because "it damns everything it touches," and at the same time submitted a 10-point program aimed to wipe out the evils.

This document, given to the Arkansas Tenancy Commission, hit Gov. J. M. Futrell of the State for failure to include a union member of the commission composed of Southern governors and sociologists who began a two-day session Monday at Hot Springs intended to remedy conditions.

"Tenancy, as practiced in the South today, is not only indefensible from a social viewpoint but equally so from an economic viewpoint," the booklet set forth. "The present system of sharecropping combines the worst features of 18th century feudalism and 20th century finance capitalism. As a result literally thousands of workers on some large plantations are in a more hapless condition than their forebears who worked in chattel slavery."

### ARKANSAS PICKER JAILED

Commercial Appeal 9-19-36

#### Fine, Sentence Result From Charge of Intimidating Workers

BLYTHEVILLE, Ark., Sept. 18.—Charged with intimidation of laborers, L. H. Houston, a cotton picker, was fined $500 and sentenced to 12 months in jail b Judge Doyle Henderson in municipal court here today.

Memphis, Tenn.

Houston was tried after a number of cotton pickers in the Dell community complained Houston had threatened them if they continued to pick cotton for less than $1 per hundred pounds.

The defendant appealed to circuit court and Judge Henderson fixed his bond at $750.

The pickers who were threatened were working on the Lester Gill farm near Dell and Houston was employed on an adjoining farm, witnesses said.

# FARM PEONAGE CHARGES GIVEN TO GRAND JURY

Post 9-23-36

## Federal Agents Offer Data At Little Rock After Investigation

Birmingham, Ala.

By United Press.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Sept. 23.—Interest in Arkansas' sharecropper problems today shifted from Gov. J. M. Futrell's Farm Tenancy Commission to a Federal Grand Jury probe of peonage charges in the East Arkansas cotton area which was to open here.

Fourteen witnesses, 10 of them Negroes, have been called by Federal investigators to testify in regard to peonage charges.

Richard P. Shanahan and Gordon Dean, Federal investigators of the Department of Justice, will lay data before the jury which they have gathered during the past two weeks. Their data has been collected first hand in a tour of East Arkansas where violence has been reported periodically during cotton field strikes for the past two years.

The jury will be asked to return indictments under the Federal act of 1867, which prohibits peonage and provides heavy punishment for violators of the law. It also probably will take up an investigation into the flogging of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis Socialist, who was whipped near Earle, Arkansas, last June.

The Rev. Claude Williams, Little Rock, was flogged at the same time but Federal authorities pointed out his case was not under Federal jurisdiction. Miss Blagden, a resident of Tennessee, was flogged in another state which makes her case fall under the Federal statutes.

# ARKANSAS OFFICER ACCUSED AS SLAVER

Times

## Federal Indictment Alleges Marshal at Earle Seized Negroes for His Farm.

9-25-36

### PEONAGE CHARGES DENIED

New York, N.Y.

#### County Grand Jury Asserts It Found No Evidence of Forced Labor Conditions in Area.

LITTLE ROCK, Sept. 24 (AP).—A Federal grand jury investigating reports of peonage in the East Arkansas cotton belt indicted a city official today on charges of violating the Federal anti-slavery laws by obtaining laborers for his farm through false arrests.

The indictment named City Marshal Paul D. Peacher of Earle, Ark., a cotton planter and former deputy Sheriff of Crittenden County, on eight counts alleging violation of a law enacted just after the Civil War.

Fred Isgrig, Federal Attorney, said the charge specifically was "aiding and abetting in holding in slavery."

After the grand jury was discharged, Mr. Isgrig joined Gordon Dean, special assistant to the United States Attorney General, and Richard P. Shanahan, attorney for the Criminal Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who were in charge of the inquiry, in announcing that steps had been taken "to protect all witnesses before the grand jury from intimidation."

Only a few hours before the Federal grand jurors completed their work the Crittenden County grand jury returned a report denying that any peonage conditions existed in that section.

Peacher's bond was fixed at $5,000, but he was not immediately taken into custody.

**Eight Negroes Involved**

Explaining the indictment, Mr. Shanahan said:

"The eight counts charged Peacher with falsely charging eight Negroes with vagrancy and bringing them before Mayor Mitchell in Justice Court at Earle, where they were illegally convicted and sentenced to work on Peacher's farm for his own use and benefit."

Mr. Isgrig withheld the names of the eight Negroes involved, asserting, "I don't want them intimidated."

"The truth of the matter is the investigation involved twenty to twenty-five Negroes railroaded on trumped-up charges," he added.

Mr. Isgrig said that he had notified all witnesses appearing before the grand jury to report to him "any threat of intimidation as a result of their testimony," and that he also had discussed this with Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle and A. B. Carter, Crittenden County deputy clerk of court, who were summoned before the jury.

"I notified Mitchell and Carter to go back home and tell the citizenship of the community they had better see that these witnesses are protected," said Mr. Isgrig. "These people must not be molested. even by suggestion. There will be prompt prosecution by the government of any threat against them."

Mr. Dean said he had written to Sheriff Howard Curlin of Crittenden County requesting that he see that none of these Negroes who appeared before the grand jury is intimidated.

Mr. Isgrig said he planned to try the Peacher indictment at the regular ter mof District Court in Jonesboro in November.

**Nine Field Hands Heard**

Nine Negro field hands were among those called before the Federal investigators.

Witnesses on leaving the grand jury room said they had been cautioned not to discuss their testimony.

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"It has been charged that humble citizens have been forced to labor by threats, intimidation, guns and illegal process," said the report. "Consequently we have felt it our duty to make an investigation into such alleged law violations and we beg to report that we have not found any evidence of violations of the law in any instance.

"We have further found that farm laborers are being well paid, conditions are good, and that since 1933 farm labor has received more money after the disposal of the annual crops than in many years, and propaganda to the contrary is misleading to the nation."

**Second Time Law Has Been Used**

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24.—The indictment of a peace officer at Little Rock was under the Federal Anti-Slavery Statute of 1866, based on the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, officials of the Department of Jus-

9-25-36
New York, N.Y.

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# TENANT UNIONS FEAR 'TROUBLE' AT GATHERINGS

Post

## New Tenseness Followed By Request For Protection At Memphis

9-25-36

Copyright, 1936, by United Press

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 25.—The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union moved quickly today to capitalize upon recognition afforded by Federal grand jury indictment at Little Rock of an Eastern Arkansas deputy sheriff on peonage charges and by the Arkansas Tenancy Commission meeting at Hot Springs.

Union Executive Secretary H. L. Mitchell appealed from union headquarters here to Gov. J. M. Futrell of Arkansas for "protection" during a series of union meetings today and tomorrow as tenseness renewed throughout the troubled Arkansas delta cottonfield area due to renewed union activities.

Mitchell acted while Federal Dist. Atty. Fred A. Isrig made plans to prosecute Deputy Sheriff P. D. Peacher, of Earle, Ark., on peonage charges returned in an indictment by the Arkansas Federal Grand Jury at Little Rock yesterday.

The indictment, returned shortly after the jury heard testimony from 14 witnesses and Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, charged Peacher specifically with "aiding and abetting to the return of slavery."

Peacher, the indictment alleges, falsely charged eight Negro farm hands with vagrancy and brought them before Mayor T. S. Mitchell, justice of peace at Earle. They were "illegally convicted and sentenced to work on Peacher's farm for his own use and benefit," said Richard P. Shanahan, FBI investigator.

The Negroes were sentenced to pay a fine of $25 or serve 30 days, it was brought out, and they accepted the sentence because they had insufficient funds. They were pardoned after 20 days by Governor Futrell, just after the latter had received a report from FBI Agent Sam Whittaker, Chattanooga, Tenn., who made a preliminary peonage study of conditions at Earle.

# OFFER PLAN TO END SERFDOM, PEONAGE

MEMPHIS, Sept. 24—(ANP)—In a 26-page document on cotton field labor conditions, the interracial Southern Tenant Farmers' Union pleaded for abolition of the entire sharecropper system because "it damns everything it touches," and at the same time submitted a 10-point program aimed to wipe out the evils.

This document, given to the Arkansas Tenancy Commission, hit Gov. J. M. Futrell of the state for failure to include a union member of the commission composed of Southern governors and sociologists who began a two-day session Monday at Hot Springs intended to remedy conditions.

"Tenancy, as practiced in the South today, is not only indefensible from a social viewpoint but equally so from an economic viewpoint," the booklet set forth. "The present system of sharecropping combines the worst features of 18th century feudalism and 20th century finance capitalism. As a result literally thousands of workers on some large plantations are in a more hapless condition than their forebears who worked in chattel slavery."

## ARKANSAS PICKER JAILED

Commercial Appeal 9-19-36

### Fine, Sentence Result From Charge of Intimidating Workers

BLYTHEVILLE, Ark., Sept. 18.—Charged with intimidation of laborers, L. H. Houston, a cotton picker, was fined $500 and sentenced to 12 months in jail b Judge Doyle Henderson in municipal court here today.

Memphis, Tenn.

Houston was tried after a number of cotton pickers in the Dell community complained Houston had threatened them if they continued to pick cotton for less than $1 per hundred pounds.

The defendant appealed to circuit court and Judge Henderson fixed his bond at $750.

The pickers who were threatened were working on the Lester Gill farm near Dell and Houston was employed on an adjoining farm, witnesses said.

# FARM PEONAGE CHARGES GIVEN TO GRAND JURY

Post 9-23-36

## Federal Agents Offer Data At Little Rock After Investigation

Birmingham Ala.

By United Press.

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Sept. 23.—Interest in Arkansas' sharecropper problems today shifted from Gov. J. M. Futrell's Farm Tenancy Commission to a Federal Grand Jury probe of peonage charges in the East Arkansas cotton area which was to open here.

Fourteen witnesses, 10 of them Negroes, have been called by Federal investigators to testify in regard to peonage charges.

Richard P. Shanahan and Gordon Dean, Federal investigators of the Department of Justice, will lay data before the jury which they have gathered during the past two weeks. Their data has been collected first hand in a tour of East Arkansas where violence has been reported periodically during cotton field strikes for the past two years.

The jury will be asked to return indictments under the Federal act of 1867, which prohibits peonage and provides heavy punishment for violators of the law. It also probably will take up an investigation into the flogging of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis Socialist, who was whipped near Earle, Arkansas, last June.

The Rev. Claude Williams, Little Rock, was flogged at the same time but Federal authorities pointed out his case was not under Federal jurisdiction. Miss Blagden, a resident of Tennessee, was flogged in another state which makes her case fall under the Federal statutes.

# ARKANSAS OFFICER ACCUSED AS SLAVER

Times

## Federal Indictment Alleges Marshal at Earle Seized Negroes for His Farm.

9-25-36

## PEONAGE CHARGES DENIED

New York, N.Y.

### County Grand Jury Asserts It Found No Evidence of Forced Labor Conditions in Area.

LITTLE ROCK, Sept. 24 (AP).—A Federal grand jury investigating reports of peonage in the East Arkansas cotton belt indicted a city official today on charges of violating the Federal anti-slavery laws by obtaining laborers for his farm through false arrests.

The indictment named City Marshal Paul D. Peacher of Earle, Ark., a cotton planter and former deputy Sheriff of Crittenden County, on eight counts alleging violation of a law enacted just after the Civil War.

Fred Isgrig, Federal Attorney, said the charge specifically was "aiding and abetting in holding in slavery."

After the grand jury was discharged, Mr. Isgrig joined Gordon Dean, special assistant to the United States Attorney General, and Richard P. Shanahan, attorney for the Criminal Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, who were in charge of the inquiry, in announcing that steps had been taken "to protect all witnesses before the grand jury from intimidation."

Only a few hours before the Federal grand jurors completed their work the Crittenden County grand jury returned a report denying that any peonage conditions existed in that section.

Peacher's bond was fixed at $5,000, but he was not immediately taken into custody.

### Eight Negroes Involved

Explaining the indictment, Mr. Shanahan said:

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Mr. Isgrig withheld the names of the eight Negroes involved, asserting, "I don't want them intimidated."

"The truth of the matter is the investigation involved twenty to twenty-five Negroes railroaded on trumped-up charges," he added.

Mr. Isgrig said that he had notified all witnesses appearing before the grand jury to report to him "any threat of intimidation as a result of their testimony," and that he also had discussed this with Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle and A. B. Carter, Crittenden County deputy clerk of court, who were summoned before the jury.

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### Second Time Law Has Been Used

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24.—The indictment of a peace officer at Little Rock was under the Federal Anti-Slavery Statute of 1866, based on the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution, officials of the Department of Jus-

tice said today.

As far as could be learned, it was the second time since the Civil War that the statute had been invoked. The only other instance department officials could discover was in 1903 in connection with the Alabama peonage cases.

# NORMAN THOMAS RAPS ARKANSAS OFFICIALS

## Calls Local Chief "Small Time Mussolini"

Norman Thomas, Socialist presidential candidate, concluded his Tennessee campaign yesterday with an attack on Arkansas state and local officials and advocation of a seven-point plan to benefit the sharecroppers.

Mr. Thomas spoke at a luncheon in his honor at the Peabody yesterday and later in the afternoon before representatives of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union from Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi and Southeast Missouri.

A seven-point plan recommending the end of poll taxes, guarantee to workers of both races the right to organize into unions, added educational facilties in the cotton country, setup of a program for diversified agriculture, government encouragement of co-operatives, and receipt of federal bounties by the workers rather than the land owners, was presented by Mr. Thomas.

Peonage and the systematic exploitation of the sharecropper in East Arkansas was charged by Mr. Thomas in his talk before the Southern Tenat Farmers Union.

The Bankhead Bill was described as "dangerous," and Chief of Police Lee, for his activties in the recent Arkansas tenant farmer trouble, was described as a "small time Mussolini."

## Tenancy Through The Ages

The Hot Springs conference on farm tenancy, as expected, evoked both sound sense and silly flubdub. Ultimately some good may come out of the present discussion of tenancy and sharecropping, but after all, the outstanding fact of the present situation is that the agitation is largely artificial and provoked by outside elements who have no real interest in southern agriculture, or any other agriculture, for that matter.

Land tenure and the status of farm labor are problems which have arisen in every age in every land. For such problems there are no pat solutions simply because the conditions of the problem change from generation to generation in a way that can never be accurately forecast at any given time. For that reason one may get as much enlightenment on the present sharecropper agitation in eastern Arkansas from the social studies of the ancient world by Michael Rostovtzeff as from most of the speeches and papers at Hot Springs. Nothing could be more naive than the idea that any permanent solution of the problem of land tenure in the alluvial south can be worked out in bright essays by bright young men not yet dry behind their intellectual ears.

Egyptian papyri on which was written the business correspondence of a large Egyptian planter in the time of Ptolemy I reveal to us that his troubles were exactly the troubles of the planter in Crittenden County, Arkansas, today. When Bed Wade and John Pierce St. John, after the Civil War, promised the negro freedman 40 acres and a mule, and urged the confiscation of southern real estate, they were merely echoing the Gracchi and other agrarian leaders in the last days of the Roman Republic. The evolution of the large slave estate into a sharecropping system after our Civil War followed the pattern of the breakup of slavery in the Roman Empire. As one writer puts it:

> Where new soils of virgin fertility were conquered and colonized, or where a sufficient stream of young adult male captives were available, systems of large estates flourished; but with the using up of the original lush fertility, and with the eventual restoration of normal age and sex ratios among the working populations, these systems all appear to have declined. In the Roman world the slave estate gave way to the colonate or serf-farmed countryside. Although a servile status and large ownerships survived for a time, the farm operations appear to have dissolved quite generally into family unit undertakings.

In the south that phase of history has been passed. There is no legal serfdom binding the tenant to the soil. The logical next step would be the appearance of the independent small farmer. In the long run small family unit farming always displaces the large estate, but that only has happened in a natural manner through processes of free competition. It possibly can be accelerated by government intervention, loans to tenants or land purchase by government, but we have no evidence that such methods really hasten a sound and permanent regime of small family unit farms. In this country the process has been carried on with little government aid other than the homestead laws. As Dr. C. L. Holmes says:

> North Dakota and the west coast states had their periods of bonanza farming, which was essentially the factory idea applied to the farm so far as technical limitations permitted it to be applied. Almost universally this system began in the pioneer stages of agricultural development in the regions where it had significant place. Almost universally also it failed to withstand the competition of small holders in the stages of advanced development of agriculture in the several regions.

Why has this breakup not occurred in the flat lands of the Mississippi Valley? To ask the question is almost to answer it. Everyone familiar with the history of this region knows that ample lands have always been available here to the ambitious homesteader. But the homesteader type has been too rare. The former slave population and even a large part of the white tenants have not sought the rigors of free competition. They preferred the shelter of paternalism on the large estate. The landowner has never taken advantage of his opportunity to change over from a quasi feudal basis to the pure capitalistic system of production under which in hard times he would be free, like the northern industrial corporation, to fire his labor, cut production and impose upon the public treasury the burden of feeding his former employes.

The landowner has gone on carrying the burden of what Karl Marx called the "industrial reserve army"—that is, the unemployed in slack times who can be hired when times are good. No emancipation proclamation freed the southern landowner of the frightful burden of carrying labor in lean as well as fat years. Slavery bankrupted him, because slavery capitalized human earning power. But emancipation did not emancipate him from the fixed charges that slavery had imposed.

No approach to the problem of land tenure in the alluvial south is worth a whoop, unless basic economic and historical facts are taken into account. The "plight of the tenant farmer" is merely one phase of the common plight of the landowner and his help. Both are in a measure victims of an economic lag, which has projected the obligations of agrarian paternalism into an age when no such obligations have been imposed upon the industrialist. Meanwhile both landowner and tenant have been robbed for 75 years by the protective tariff that has sucked the blood of both the west and south for the fattening of urban industries. No "farm relief" or "tenant relief" that ignores that fundamental maladjustment will be of permanent value. To paraphrase Victor Hugo, "the only way industrial capitalism can help the farmer is to get off his back."

# Peacher Pays $3,500 Fine To Avoid Peonage Jail Term

Special to The Commercial Appeal

JONESBORO, Ark., Dec. 17.—Paul D. Peacher, 47-year-old Earle marshal, paid a $3,500 fins in United States district court for eastern Arkansas here this afternoon and announced:

"I hope this ends the whole thing."

The "whole thing" he referred to was his conviction Nov. 25 on seven counts in an indictment charging him with aiding and abetting in holding in slavery seven negroes.

He was assessed the fine and sentenced to the federal penitentiary on each of the counts, the sentences to run concurrently. However, Federal Judge Martineau agreed to place him on probation for two years if he paid the fine.

Several days after being convicted Peacher, through his attorneys, filed notice of appeal to the United States eighth district circuit court of appeals at St. Louis. Later he decided to pay the fine.

Peacher stated after his conviction that he would not resign as marshal.

He was convicted of falsely arresting eight negroes and having them convicted in justice of the peace court on vagrancy charges in order that they could be leased to him as prisoner labor. One of the prosecuting witnesses disappeared shortly before the case was to go to trial and only seven were present. Peacher paid his fine to Mrs. Bess Mathes, deputy clerk. He was accompanied by one of his attorneys, Joe C. Barrett.

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# 8 Negroes Held in Peonage; Planter-Deputy Denies Guilt

## Arkansas Sharecroppers Penalized for Part in Cotton Strike

JONESBORO, Ark. Nov. 23.—Although caught red-handed in the operation of a peonage farm, P. D. Peacher, former Deputy Sheriff, today pleaded "not guilty" to federal charges of arresting eight Negro sharecroppers and forcing them to work as slaves.

Peacher's trial is expected to come up tomorrow. All eight of the Negroes were framed for participating in the sharecroppers' strike early this year.

Peacher was indicted by a federal grand jury last September, and his plea today is the second major development in the case which threatens to open up slave-farm conditions suffered by Negroes rivalling those before the Civil war.

The indictment charges him with "aiding and abetting in causing persons to be held as slaves" in violation of a 60 year old statute.

The government, according to U. S. Attorney Fred Isrig, will attempt to show that the eight Negro sharecroppers were arrested because they participated in the sharecroppers strike sponsored by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union last Spring.

The arrests were based on trumped-up charges of "vagrancy" and were made in the course of a state-wide terror campaign against Arkansas sharecroppers and poor farmers. Several Negroes were murdered. Others have never been heard from since the strike.

Evidence brought out thus far in the case shows that the practice of forcing Negroes to work on private peonage farms has the official sanction of Crittenden and other counties in the state.

Landlords point out a Negro, have him arrested and then obtain a permit from the county to have him transferred to their private slave farms.

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## *JURY COMPLETED FOR 'SLAVE' TRIAL*

### *Arkansas Marshal Denies He Held and Worked Negroes in Strike.*

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 23.—(AP) A jury composed of 11 businessmen and one farmer was selected in federal district court here tonight to hear the case of Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earle, Ark., and former Crittenden county deputy sheriff, charged with aiding and abetting in "causing persons to be held as slaves."

Peacher entered a plea of innocence to the charge he held and worked negroes on his place during a cottonchoppers' strike in east Arkansas last spring.

When the jury was completed after an examination which included defense questioning on the political party affiliations, Judge John E. Martineau recessed court until tomorrow morning.

Having 20 challenges, the defense exercised 11, four of them in excusing prospective jurors who said they belonged to the Republican party.

In addition to the political party question, the defense asked each venireman if he was "a follower of Norman Thomas," the Socialist party leader. None answered in the affirmative.

The court excused three veniremen who said they were "prejudiced against negroes," 11 of whom were sworn as witnesses today.

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# ARREST OF NEGROES DEFENDED BY PEACHER

### Contract With County Cited by Earle Marshal

## FARM WORK IS JUSTIFIED

### Witnesses Deny Charges of Vagrancy That Resulted in Fine of $25, Sentence to 30 Days

By The Associated Press

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 24.—Paul D. Peacher, Earle city marshal, charged with violating the federal anti-slavery statute by arresting negroes who were sentenced to work on his farm, took the stand in federal district court late today to defend his acts as "official acts."

Taking of testimony was concluded late today and arguments of attorneys will begin at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow. Each side was granted an hour aid 15 minutes for argument, indicating that the jury would start deliberations around noon.

Peacher told the jury trying him on a charge of "aiding and abetting in causing persons to be held as slaves" that the negroes he arrested last May were vagrants, that they were sentenced to $25 fines and 30 days after regular justice of the peace court procedure, and that he had an agreement with his county for working prisoners on his place.

### Oral Agreement

He said it was not a written agreement, but that he believed he had "filled all the requirements" for a valid contract.

"I arrested these negroes because they were loafing around town," he testified. "I have known them all for years. As a general rule, they were loafers and a honky-tonk bunch."

Peacher testified after seven negroes, called by the government, accused him of arresting them without cause and having them work on his property in East Arkansas.

When the defense attempted to introduce evidence attacking the characters of the negro witnesses, Judge John E. Martineau interrupted to rule:

"The guilt or innocence of these men is not involved in this trial. The intent with which peacher arrested them and whether they received a fair trial are the issues."

Peacher said the negroes had had "regular trials" before Mayor and Justice of the Peace T. S. Mitchell of Earle.

Sheriff Howard Curlin of Crittenden County testified for the defense that he had conferred with County Judge J. C. Johnson on Peacher's request for authority to work county prisoners and that he had told Peacher "it would be all right."

### Suffering From Cold

Peacher, 42, tanned, but suffering from a cold which he blamed on "this stuffy courtroom," listened stolidly to the accusations.

His attorneys answered the charge that he "aided and abetted in causing persons to be held as slaves" with the claim that he acted only in his official capacity.

Answering a defense contention that he had a valid contract to work prisoners on his farm, the government called to the stand A. B. Carter, chief deputy clerk of Crittenden County, who said there was no such contract on record.

When he presented a bond filed by Peacher for working prisoners, the government established that it was not dated, and charged it was filed after federal investigation was started into alleged peonage conditions.

Winfield Anderson, 51, negro of Earle, first government witness to be called, told the story of his arrest last May. He said he was self-supporting, as did six other negroes who followed him on the stand.

### Owns Home

Anderson said he owned his home in Earle and had a steady income from an injury-compensation. The witness claimed he was arrested at his home by Peacher, without explanation, taken before Mayor Mitchell, charged with vagrancy along with 12 other negroes and sent to the Peacher farm to work out a sentence of "$25 and 30 days."

He contended none of the prisoners was given food for three days after their arrests, and that some escaped, although the group was kept under guard by day and in a stockade at night.

"I didn't try to escape because I wanted to stay in Earle with my family, and I thought if I tried to escape I couldn't return," Anderson testified.

Called by the government, Mayor Mitchell took the stand to say he had sentenced the negroes "on Peacher's word that they were vagrants."

The government rested late today.

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# ARKANSAS NEGROES TELL OF 'SLAVERY'

### Seven Testify at Federal Trial of Being Seized as 'Vagrants' and Forced to Labor.

## MARSHAL DEFENDS ACTS

### City Official Says the Sentences Were 'Regular' and Work on His Farm a Contract Right.

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 24 (AP). —City Marshal Paul D. Peacher of Earle, Ark., testified today at his trial on charges of violating the Federal anti-slavery law, that his arrests of Negroes who were later sent to his farm in East Arkansas to work out sentences were "official acts" and that the men had "regular trials."

He took the stand after seven Negroes called by the government accused him of arresting them without cause. When the defense attempted to introduce evidence attacking the characters of the Negro witnesses, Federal Judge John E. Martineau interrupted to rule:

"The guilt or innocence of these men is not involved in this trial. The intent with which Peacher arrested them and whether they received a fair trial are the issues."

Taking testimony ended late today. Arguments of attorneys will begin tomorrow, with each side entitled to an hour and fifteen minutes.

Peacher told the jury trying him on a charge of "aiding and abetting in causing persons to be held as salves" that the Negroes he arrested last May were vagrants, that they received sentences of $25 fine and thirty days after regular procedure in the Justice of the Peace court.

He had an agreement with his county for working prisoners on his place, he said, but added that it was not a written one. He believed, however, that he had "filled all the requirements" for a valid contract.

"I arrested these Negroes because they were loafing around town," he testified. "I have known them all for years. As a general rule, they were loafers and a honkey-tonk bunch."

### Sheriff a Defense Witness

Sheriff Howard Curlin of Crittenden County testified for the defense that he had conferred with County Judge J. C. Johnson on Peacher's request for authority to work county prisoners and that he had told the marshal "It would be all right."

Seeking to refute a defense contention that the marshal had a valid contract to work prisoners, the government called to the stand A. B. aCrter, chief deputy clerk of Crittenden County, who said no such contract was on record.

He presented a bond filed by Peacher for working prisoners, and the government estabilshed that it was not dated and declared that it was filed after the beginning of the federal investigation into alleged peonage conditions.

Winfield Anderson, 51-year-old Earle Negro, first government witness, told of his arrest by Peacher last May. He said he was self-supporting, as did the six other Negroes who followed him on the stand with virtually the same story.

Anderson said he owned his own home in Earle and had a steady income from an injury compensation. The witness said that he was arrested at his home without explanation, taken to the Justice Court of Mayor T. S. Mitchell, charged with vagrancy along with twelve other Negroes, and sent to the Peacher farm to work out a sentence of "$25 and thirty days."

He declared that none of the prisoners received food for three days after their arrest.

They were kept at night in a stockade, with barred windows, under guard, he related, adding that he cut logs "until I took sick and my right arm went bad." Some of the prisoners escaped, he said.

Mayor Mitchell, called by the government, testified that he had sentenced the Negroes "on Peacher's word that they were vagrants."

**Thomas Assails Use of Name**

Norman Thomas, Socialist Presidential candidate at the recent election, was quoted yesterday by The Associated Press as saying:

"It is reported in newspaper dispatches from Jonesboro, Ark., that in the trial of J. D. Peacher, charged with the practice of peonage, his lawyer asked of prospective jurors not only questions concerning political affiliations but speifically: 'Are you a follower of Norman Thomas?'

"There is no reason why my name should be injected into the case in questioning jurors any more than Senator Joe Robinson's name or Governor Futrell's name. Indeed it would be more to the point to ask their relations to Senator Robinson."

# NEGRO TELLS HOW DEPUTY ENSLAVED HIM

## Arkansas Trial Sounds Like Echo of Before the Civil War

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 24.—If you shut your eyes in Federal Court here today and listened to Winfield Anderson, one of eight Negroes held in slavery by Paul D. Peacher, you'd think you were hearing stories of the Old South before the Civil War.

11-25-36

But the testimony of Anderson, first witness in the peonage trial of Peacher, a former deputy sheriff, referred to conditions in the farm regions of the South today, where striking sharecroppers are sentenced to forced labor on private farms.

Anderson testified that he was illegally arrested and sentenced into slavery on Peacher's farm. Peacher arrested him on a charge of vagrancy, despite the fact he owned his own home, was receiving a pension, and had money in his pockets. This happened during the Southern Tenant Farmers' strike, when landlords and police officers ran roughshod over the striking sharecroppers.

The jury of one farmer and eleven business men was selected from thirty-four veniremen, two of whom were disqualified when they said they would not give Negroes the same consideration they would give white persons. The jurors were carefully questioned on their political affiliations by Defense Attorney Joe Barrett, who explained:

"We just want to be certain we don't have a bunch of Socialists on it."

He got 11 Democrats and one Republican.

**INDICTED DURING STRIKE**

Peacher was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury in Little Rock last September, after an investigation into peonage conditions in East Arkansas during a strike of tenants and sharecroppers last Spring.

The slave-holding officer is specifically charged with falsely arresting eight Negroes for vagrancy and forcing them to clear land for him on his farm, a practice which Peacher claims was sanctioned by Crittenden County authorities, and which N. F. Lamb, Jonesboro attorney, said was common throughout the state.

The indictment says Peacher did "aid and abet in causing persons to be held as slaves."

The government contends that the Negroes were not vagrants or loiterers, but participants in the strike called by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. Hence their arrest was illegal, and their forced labor is a violation of the peonage sections in the Federal Penal Code.

The trial is continuing.

# JUDGE GIVES PEACHER 2 YEARS, $3,500 FINE

## Jury Brings Conviction After Nearly Three Hours

11-26-36

## MAY PROBATE SENTENCE

### Bond For Marshal Set At $4,000—Martineau Gives Opinion All Evidence Pointed to Guilt

By The Associated Press

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 25.—Federal Judge John E. Martineau sentenced Paul D. Peacher, Earle city marshal, to two years in prison and imposed a $3,500 fine late today following Peacher's conviction on a charge of violating anti-slavery statutes.

Martineau sentenced the marshal to two years on each of seven counts of an indictment charging he forced negroes to work on his farm after their conviction of vagrancy in justice court, the sentences to run concurrently.

The judge declared he would place Peacher on probation if he paid the fine, which would make it unnecessary for him to enter prison.

**Peacher Smiles**

He fixed the marshal's bond at $4,000 and allowed defense attorneys three days to decide if they would appeal. He later made bond and was released from custody.

Peacher smiled broadly when the jury returned its verdict convicting him on all seven counts. The jury deliberated two and a half hours.

An hour earlier, the jury had filed into the courtroom to ask the judge for detailed instructions and Martineau said, "Every circumstances in this case points to the guilt of this man, in my opinion."

Defense counsel immediately interposed vigorous objections. The presiding judge said the jury should not be bound by his remarks but that he was stating "my opinion."

Peacher was convicted of arresting negroes and then working them on his farm after they had been convicted of vagrancy in justice of the peace court.

**Claimed Contract**

The arrests were made last May, during a cotton-choppers' strike in East Arkansas. Peacher claimed he had a valid contract with his county for working prisoners and testified the negroes he arrested were known to him as vagrants.

Answering this contention, Gordon Dean, special attorney for the Department of Justice, who conducted a peonage investigation in the area earlier this year, told the jury:

11-26-36

"The government insists Peacher aided in causing these men to be held in involuntary servitude."

Judge N. S. Lamb of defense counsel said in his closing argument that the defense had expected the case to be dropped after the recent national election.

**Names Tenant Union**

"I thought when the election was over, this lawsuit would be allowed to die out," he said. "There had to be an investigation with the Tenant Union sending messages to the president and to Governor Futrell, and the election coming on."

He charged the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, headquartered at Memphis, was "back of this whole situation."

The jury received the case at 12:40 p.m., recessed for lunch and began deliberations at 2 p.m.

**Charges Planters Donated To Defense**

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 25. —(AP)—Federal District Attorney Fred A. Isgrig said today he had received "reliable information" that planters and others subscribed to a $5,000 fund for defense of Paul D. Peacher.

Isgrig said:

"From reliable information it was reported to me that $5,000 was raised by planters and other interested parties in Eastern Arkansas for the defense of Peacher. I am advised contributions ranged from $25 up and were made by popular subscription, but mostly confined to owners of extensive plantations in Eastern Arkansas.

"Individual instances reported to me included contributions in Crittenden and Mississippi counties, and I am advised there are others."

**Cummings Satisfied Law and Order Won**

WASHINGTON, Nov. 25.—(AP)—Attorney General Cummings tonight expressed "great satisfaction" with the success of government attorneys in obtaining a conviction on slavery charges of Paul D. Peacher in Arkansas.

After being advised that Peacher had been fined and sentenced for holding a group of negroes in a state of servitude, the attorney general said:

"I congratulate the government counsel in handling the case and I consider the conviction a distinct victory for law and order."

The attorney general had expressed personal interest in the case from its beginning and last Sunday sent Brien McMahon, assistant attorney general, to Arkansas by airplane to take command in presenting the government's case.

# OFFICER ACCUSED AT PEONAGE TRIAL

## Arkansas City Marshal Is Alleged To Have Held Eight In Slavery

JONESBORO, ARK., Nov. 23.—(AP)—Charges that Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earle, Ark., and former Crittenden County deputy sheriff, aided and abetted in "causing persons to be held as slaves" during a cotton-choppers' strike in east Arkansas last Spring, moved toward trial in Federal District Court today after he had entered a plea of innocence.

Thirty witnesses, whites and negroes, about evenly divided between defense and prosecution, were on hand to testify. Selection of a jury was delayed as Federal Judge John E. Martineau cleared the docket of other matters.

The 42-year-old Peacher, an "out-of-doors" man, tanned and wiry, arose calmly and confidently indicated his attorney when a clerk called "the case of the United States vs. P. D. Peacher."

"We waive arraignment and plead not guilty," said the attorney, Rex Wheeler, of Marion, as the defendant sat down again.

11-24-36

Thus opened the first court procedure to be held in this State under the post-Civil War anti-slavery statute of 1866.

Wheeler said the Earle marshal was ready to go to trial at once on the Federal Grand Jury indictment of last September which charged him with falsely arresting eight negroes and having them clear lands for him after they had been "wrongfully and illegally" sentenced to 30 days each on vagrancy charges.

The attorney said here today that Peacher had engaged only in small scale farming operations, devoting most of his time both before and after his indictment to his official duties as Earle marshal.

Conviction on the charge against Peacher would carry a maximum fine of $5,000 and imprisonment up to five years.

Arkansas.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions-

# OFFICER UNMOVED AT PEONAGE TRIAL

## Seven Negroes Testify To Their Arrest Without Cause, Forced To Work Farm

Advertiser

JONESBORO, ARK., Nov. 24.—(AP)—Seven negroes charged from the witness stand in Federal District Court today that Paul D. Peacher, Earle, Ark., city marshal, indicted for alleged violation of the Federal anti-slavery statute, arrested them without cause and had them work on his property in east Arkansas last Spring.

11-25-36

Montgomery, Ala.

Peacher, 42, tanned from the out-doors but suffering from a cold which he blamed on "this stuffy courtroom," listened stolidly to the accusations, tilted back in his chair at his counsel's table.

His attorneys answered the charge that he "aided and abetted in causing persons to be held as slaves" with the claim that he acted only in his official capacity in arresting loitering negroes and having them sentenced to 30 days.

### Charges "Cover Up"

Answering a defense contention that the marshal had a valid contract with his county to work prisoners on his farm, the Government called to the stand A. B. Carter, chief deputy clerk of Crittenden County, who said there was no such contract on record. When he presented a bond filed by Peacher for working prisoners, the Government established that it was not dated and charged it was filed after Federal investigation was started into alleged peonage conditions in eastern Arkansas.

Winfield Anderson, 51-year-old negro of Earle, first Government witness to be called, told the story of his arrest by Peacher last May. Anderson said he owned his own home in Earle and had a steady income from an injury-compensation. The witness claimed he was arrested at his home by Peacher, without explanation, taken to the Justice of the Peace Court of Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle, charged with vagrancy along with 12 other negroes and sent to the Peacher farm to work out a sentence of "$25 and 30 days."

He contended none of the prisoners was given food for three days after their arrests and that some escaped, although the group was kept under guard by day and in a stockade at night.

"I didn't try to escape because I wanted to stay in Earle with my family and I thought if I tried to escape, I couldn't return," Anderson testified.

Called by the Government, Mayor Mitchell said he sentenced the negroes "on Peacher's word that they were vagrants."

The Mayor related that on May 19, 1936, he had a call from Peacher asking for warrants for a group of negroes he had arrested for "vagrancy." The warrants were issued, he said, and the negroes brought to his court the next day.

"Peacher said he had arrested them because they were not working. I took Peacher's word for a fact they were vagrants and sentenced them to $25 or 30 days on Peacher's farm," said Mitchell.

The Government rested late today.

Peacher told the jury the negroes he arrested last May were vagrants, that they were sentenced to $25 fine and 30 days after regular justice of the peace court procedure, and that he had an agreement with his county for working prisoners on his place.

He said it was not a written agreement, but that he believed he had "filled all the requirements" for a valid contract.

Taking of testimony was concluded late today and arguments of attorneys will begin at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow. Each side was granted an hour and 15 minutes for argument, indicating that the jury would start deliberations around noon.

Egypt is establishing many new industrial plants.

Brazil is experimenting to establish a silk industry.

# ARKANSAS OFFICER CONVICTED BY JURY ON SLAVERY CHARGE

Times

## Federal Court Sentences Marshal to Two Years and Fines Him $3,500.

11-26-36

## PRISONER FREED ON BOND

New York, N.Y.

## Judge Asserts the Mayor Was Forced to Hold Negroes for Work on Cotton Farm.

By The Associated Press.

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 25.—A Federal court jury convicted Paul D. Peacher, planter-peace officer, today on charges of violating an ancient anti-slavery statute. He was sentenced to two years in prison and fined $3,500.

Judge John E. Martineau imposed the sentence immediately, despite a jury recommendation of clemency and a request tha the 42-year-old Earle, Ark., town marshal not be imprisoned.

The court, however, said he would put Peacher on probation if he paid the fine, making it unnecessary for him to serve the sentence. Judge Martineau fixed bond at $4,000 and gave to the defense three days to decide whether to appeal.

Although he smiled when the verdict was read, Peacher displayed belligerency when approached later in the marshal's office, where he waited while attorneys attempted to perfect bond.

"Get away from here and don't mess with me," he shouted. "I don't want to talk to anybody now while I'm in the marshal's office."

Brien McMahon of Washington, assistant Attorney General in charge of the criminal division, declared:

"I feel the conviction will have a most salutary effect upon men who attempt to use the processes of law to perpetuate a practice which was supposed to have been done away with in this country nearly a century ago."

The jury convicted Peacher on all of seven counts of an indictment which accused him of falsely arresting a group of Negroes and forcing them to work on his farm.

The judge sentenced him to two years on each of the counts, the sentences to run concurrently.

Without comment, Peacher smiled broadly when the verdict was read, after the jury had deliberated two and a half hours.

An hour earlier the jurors asked for instructions from the judge, who told them "every circumstance in this case points to the guilt of this man in my opinion."

### Judge Assails Prisoner

Judge Martineau, addressing the jury, said:

"This is not a lone case in Arkansas. It occurs frequently and it ought to be stopped.

"It is clear to me as can be that he (Peacher) went out and arrested these Negroes not because they were violating the law, because the testimony here shows that he knew very little about any of them."

The Negroes were sentenced to $25 and thirty days in the Justice Court of Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle, before being taken to the Peacher farm to work.

"Peacher absolutely dominates this man that is Mayor, and this man does what he says," said Judge Martineau.

"This case will ultimately have to be decided by some jury. Perhaps all the testimony ever to be offered in this case has been offered to you. It is important both to the government and defense that a verdict be reached."

Peacher was said by United States Attorney Fred Isrig of Little Rock to be the first person indicted under the Federal anti-slavery statute passed in 1866.

The defense completed its arguments in the case with a declaration that the charges against Peacher were the result of politics.

Declaring the Southern Tenant Farmers Union "is back of this whole situation," Attorney N. S. Lamb closed arguments for Peacher.

"I thought when the election was over this lawsuit would be allowed to die out," Mr. Lamb told the jury of eleven business men and one farmer.

"There had to be an investigation with the tenant union sending messages to the President and to Governor Futrell, and the election coming on."

Gordon Dean, special attorney for the Department of Justice, who conducted a peonage investigation in the East Arkansas cotton country earlier this year, countered:

"The government insists Peacher aided in causing these men to be held in involuntary servitude."

The Negroes were arrested on charges of vagrancy during a cotton choppers' strike last May. Peacher, who claimed he had a contract with the county to work prisoners, said the eight were known to him as vagrants.

### Cummings Commends Prosecutors

WASHINGTON, Nov. 25 (AP).—Attorney General Cummings tonight expressed "great satisfaction" with the success of government attorneys in obtaining a conviction on slavery charges of Paul D. Peacher at Jonesboro, Ark.

"I congratulate the government counsel in handling the case and I consider the convtion a distinct victory for law and order," Mr. Cummings said.

The Attorney General had expressed personal interest in the case from its beginning, and only last Sunday sent Brien McMahon, Assistant Attorney General, to Arkansas by airplane to take command in presenting the government's case.

# Jury Shows Mercy

CITY MARSHAL PEACHER

# Officer Guilty At Slave Trial

Advertiser

## Arkansas Marshal Given 2-Year Suspended Term If He Pays $3,500 Fine

11-26-36

JONESBORO, ARK., Nov. 25.—(AP)—Convicted of holding seven negroes in slavery, City Marshal Paul D. Peacher, 42, of Earle, Ark., late today heard Federal District Judge John E. Martineau pronounce punishment of two years in the penitentiary and a $3,500 fine.

Judge Martineau, heeding the jury's recommendation for clemency, told Peach-

# PEACHER MAY APPEAL FROM SENTENCE, FINE

## Counsel Says Plea Depends on Ability To Pay $3,500

### RETURNS TO EARLE OFFICE

**Attorneys Put Case in Form for Further Court Fight—Planters Deny Raising Assistance Fund**

By The Associated Press

JONESBORO, Ark., Nov. 26.—Paul D. Peacher, city marshal at Earle, returned to his official duties today under $4,000 bond pending decision on an appeal from his conviction of subjecting seven negroes to slavery.

Still protesting his innocence. Peacher obtained his liberty last night shortly after a federal district court jury found him guilty of violation of an 1866 anti-slavery statute.

**Promised Probation**

Judge John E. Martineau fined him $3,500 and fixed sentence at two years' imprisonment on each of seven counts in the indictment. The sentences run concurrently.

Martineau told Peacher he would be placed on probation if the fine was paid. The jury recommended clemency and that the officer not be imprisoned. It deliberated two hours and a half.

"We are perfecting an appeal, although no decision has been reached on whether Peacher will pay the fine or fight the case," said Judge N. F. Lamb, head of defense counsel. He said last night an appeal would depend on whether Peacher could raise the $3,500.

**Refuses to Resign**

Declaring he would not resign as marshal, Peacher went back today to Earle, where the government accused him of falsely arresting the negroes, putting them through a mock vagrancy trial in mayor's court and having them sentenced to work on his farm clearing land.

The conclusion of the trial brought from Federal Prosecutor Fred A. Isgrig a charge that Eastern Arkansas planters raised a $5,000 fund for defense of Peacher. Judge Lamb, who charged in arguments that the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union was responsible for the prosecution, denied knowledge of such a fund.

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er that he would place him on probation if he paid the fine. Probation would permit the marshal to remain at liberty, contingent upon good behavior.

The jury's verdict found Peacher guilty on all seven counts of the indictment. Martineau sentenced him to two years on each count, the sentences to run concurrently.

The judge fixed appeal bond at $4,000 and gave defense attorneys three days in which to decide if they would contest the verdict. Peacher, who has been at liberty on bond since his indictment in September, was taken into custody by deputy U. S. marshals.

He smiled broadly when the jury's verdict was read but displayed belligerency when newspapermen approached him later in the marshal's office, where he waited while attorneys attempted to perfect bond.

"Get away from here and don't mess with me," he shouted. "I don't want to talk to anybody now while I'm in the marshal's office."

**Jury Asked Clemency**

Brien McMahon, of Washington, assistant U. S. attorney general in charge of the criminal division, declared, "I feel the conviction will have a most salutary effect upon men who attempt to use the processes of law to perpetuate a practice which was supposed to have been done away with in this country nearly a century ago."

The jury's verdict recommended clemency and specifically that Peacher not be imprisoned. The jury deliberated two hours and a half.

Peacher was charged with violating the Federal anti-slave statute by arresting negroes and then working them on his farm after they had been convicted of vagrancy in justice of the peace court.

The negroes were sentenced to $25 fines and 30 days in the justice court of Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle before being taken to the Peacher farm to work.

**Judge Raps Mayor**

"Peacher absolutely dominates this man that is mayor, and this man does what he says," said Judge Martineau.

"This case will ultimately have to be decided by some jury. Perhaps all the testimony ever to be offered in this case has been offered to you. It is important both to the Government and defense that a verdict be reached."

The arrests were made last May, during a cotton-choppers' strike in east Arkansas. Peacher claimed he had a valid contract with his county for working prisoners and testified the negroes he arrested were known to him as vagrants.

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# Arkansas Man Facing Trial On Slavery Charge

JONESBORO, ARK., Nov. 23.—(AP)—Prosecution and defense announced "ready" today for the trial in Federal District Court tomorrow of Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earle, Ark., on a charge of "aiding and abetting in causing persons to be held as slaves."

A Federal Grand Jury sitting at Little Rock last September indicted Peacher, alleging he falsely arrested a group of negroes and had them work on his place in eastern Arkansas during a cotton choppers' strike in that area last Spring.

Evidence in the case was presented to the Grand Jury by Gordon Dean and Richard P. Shanahan, special attorney for the Department of Justice, and by U. S. Atty. Fred A. Isgrig, of Little Rock. Isgrig described the indictment as the first to be returned in Arkansas under the anti-slavery statute adopted by Congress in 1866.

Atty. Gen. Cummings last week ordered his assistant, Brien McMahon, to Jonesboro, to present the Government's case in Federal Court.

Federal officials said at Little Rock today the Government was ready to go to trial tomorrow and Peacher's counsel here announced they, too, were ready.

Peacher two months ago posted $2,500 bond for his appearance in the Jonesboro court.

His indictment followed a lengthy investigation into alleged peonage conditions in Eastern Arkansas and Dist. Atty. Isgrig asserted that the Grand Jury "found no other violation anywhere in eastern Arkansas of the Federal statutes on peonage."

The indictment charged Peacher arrested and forcibly took eight negroes before a justice of the peace court at Earle, accusing them of vagrancy, and that they were "wrongfully and illegally sentenced" to 30 days, being remanded to Peacher's custody for that period.

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# Southern Courts

The Arkansas magistrate before whom the Negroes were brought whose imprisonment caused the sheriff to be convicted of peonage by the federal authorities last week, confessed that no form of trial was used in their cases. In Mississippi the prosecution by agreeing to compromise the cases of the three Negroes who originally were sentenced to death on the charge of murdering a planter, admits that the one state supreme judge told the truth when he charged that their confessions were secured by third degree methods. In Alabama the state's intention to convict the Scottsboro boys, with or without evidence, is notorious.

The way justice is administered in southern courts when Negroes are on trial has long been known. These three cases cited are typical of what has gone on for years. But in all three there is a new note, not so well known. In Arkansas the federal authorities, in Mississippi a just judge, in Alabama public opinion bid the old injustice halt. At last, thank heaven, white men realize that wrong hurts the doer as well as the victims!

Many a year has passed since the Elaine riots in Arkansas, the outstanding revelation of the injustices practiced on the farms there. It took blood to quench the fire of hate at that time. Then public conscience went to sleep. It was aroused this time by a lesser outrage. Slight though the change is, it is in the direction of betterment. The Mississippi case supports that interpretation of events. The prosecution by denying that it had secured confessions from the Negroes through third degree torture administered by officers, practically admits there is a limit to what it may do. In other days it was utterly shameless.

Progress in human relations is painfully slow. For thousands of years men believed that for one man to eat another had to starve. It is not to be expected that they will accept quickly the philosophy which teaches it is more blessed to give than to receive and that each of us is his brother's keeper.

# Letters to the Editor

**EDITORIAL AMENDED**

To The Commercial Appeal:

Granting, for the sake of those thin-skinned folk who are always being offended, that peonage is not universal in the south, nevertheless your editorial on the Peacher conviction left much to be desired. First of all, his conviction was in federal court. Do not let us forget that for a moment. Next, no matter how exaggerated may be the reports that planters in Mississippi and Arkansas make a habit of asking the sheriff to round up some vagrants as there is a need for farm hands do you not think you should have made a strong bid for the repeal of the statutes permitting the hiring out of county prisoners on private work?

Nobody is trying to pin anything on the cotton country any more than the A. F. of L. is trying to disparage Florida in demanding an investigation of peonage in the turpentine camps. Wherever in our country human rights are being invaded, no matter how poor and lowly the victims may be, all good Americans, to say nothing of all good Christians, ought to rise up and demand justice. The contracting of prisoners is what permits peonage. It should be stopped.

JOHN CLARENCE PETRIE,
Minister, First Unitarian Church,
Memphis.

Arkansas.

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

Rome, Ga. News-Tribune
November 30, 1936

## IMPOSITIONS UPON THE WEAK

THE peonage case that has arisen in Arkansas is a disgrace to that commonwealth and a reflection upon the entire South, because similar conditions undoubtedly have arisen in other quarters at times.

Developments of this nature serve to impose a special obligation upon the people of the South in relation to the negro, who, as a rule, is the victim of such miscarriages of justice.

To be unfair to the negro is an impulse that is entirely foreign to the average Southerner. As a general proposition his attitude is to be more sympathetic toward the negro than any other element of the citizenship because of his disadvantage. This is proved by the fact that practically every negro, however low his station, usually has some "white folks" upon whom he can call in times of trouble with the certainty that aid will be extended.

For a people, a majority of whom are so sympathetic, to be put in the light of practicing gross impositions upon helpless persons is outrageous. Yet the cure lies with the very element of Southern society which suffers most under accusations of this nature. These sympathetic and right-thinking persons can and should prevent practices of every nature that smack of unfair dealing of any kind in relation to the negro.

This is a responsibility that cannot be avoided without unfortunate results and is an obligation that should be performed, not only as an act of justice, but as an expression of the kindly impulses toward the weak that are so pronounced among the majority of white persons in the South.

Tuscaloosa, Ala., News
November 30, 1936


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Selma, Ala. Times
December 1, 1936

## A BLOW AT PEONAGE

An echo from Civil War days is heard in Arkansas, where the first conviction is secured under the law of 1866 which forbids slavery and peonage. The Farm Tenants Union hails the conviction as the harbinger of a new emancipation.

Facts in the case: Paul D. Peacher, town marshal of Earle, Ark., is found guilty of having several negroes falsely arrested on charges of vagrancy in the course of a farm-labor strike and condemning them to work out fines by labor on his own farm. A fine of $3,500 is imposed on Mr. Peacher and a two-year prison term, the latter to be suspended if the fine is paid.

Officials of the Farm Tenants Union prepare for a celebration as its secretary, H. L. Mitchell, issues this statement:

"Activities of Peacher represented the worst type of intimidation practiced against tenants and sharecroppers. His conviction should be a step toward ending lawlessness and intimidation on the part of officers and landlords in East Arkansas. Other cases similar to that of Peacher will be pressed vigorously. Such cases will take the form of damage suits against individual persons rather than criminal procedures."

Nashville, Tenn. Tennessean—M'ng
November 27, 1936

## Arkansas Slavery.

When an Arkansas city marshal is convicted by an Arkansas jury on charges of holding seven negroes in slavery, it is reasonable to assume that there has been no miscarriage of justice.

In charging the jury at Jonesboro, Ark., a federal district judge declared that every circumstance pointed to the guilt of City Marshal Paul D. Peacher, in his opinion, and added:

"This is not a lone case in Arkansas. It occurs frequently and it ought to be stopped."

By what means did this man clothed in authority bring seven negroes to a status held by a judge and jury to be slavery? By the simple expedient of rounding them up on charges of vagrancy, despite the fact that they did not merit that status, and hauling them before a convenient justice of the peace where sentence was quickly imposed. By some convenient arrangement the prisoners were then turned over to Peacher to work out their sentence on his farm.

Eleven business men and one farmer, composing the jury, were convinced that this did not merely happen, but that it was a well planned method of getting free labor. But, although finding Peacher guilty on all counts, justifying a sentence of two years in the penitentiary and a fine of $3,500, their recommendation of clemency and specification that the defendant be not imprisoned, clears the way for a probation status for the farmer-marshal if the fine is paid.

Nevertheless, an important step has been taken toward breaking up a practice that is perhaps not confined to the state of Arkansas. There have been peonage scandals in the South before, it must be regretfully admitted. But where the press is willing to expose conditions and where the courts are determined to punish violations, the end is in sight for such perversion of the processes of law.

Arkansas has come in for much unfavorable publicity of late over farm tenantry, but in this case there was no relationship to that confused social problem. Defense attorneys who tried to link the two failed utterly in their purpose.

The victims of a corrupt local system were merely hard working men, seemingly without influence and friends. It developed, however, that the federal government was ready and willing to stand behind them in the fight for their constitutional rights, and the result should be gratifying to all.

If this was not an isolated case in Arkansas, as the judge observed, it is to be hoped that there will be no delay in clearing up the others

Nashville, Tenn. Banner
November 28, 1936

## ARKANSAS EXONERATED

While conviction of Paul D. Peacher, Arkansas cotton planter and city marshal, on the charge of enslaving seven Negroes turned over to his tender care upon being found guilty of vagrancy, proves that Peacher did just that, and perhaps demonstrates by implication that the practice was not entirely new either to him or others in a like position, it also clarifies the status of the charges brought, and exonerates Arkansans as a whole who have been unjustly accused of practising peonage as a policy traditional to the sharecrop system.

**Peacher's conviction is just, on the basis of the evidence. At the same time, it is well to bring out the facts of the case, lack of which has stigmatized the fair name of Arkansas wherever irresponsible talemongers have sought by deliberate misrepresentation to picture that State and its neighbors as indulging peonage and related evils wholly violative of humane laws and principles.**

There is no brief for those who exploit the ignorant or helpless, whether such exploitation occurs in the South, the North, the East or the West. No sympathies will be stirred for Peacher or others of his ilk, and failure to serve out his term, or an escape by payment of a fine, will be to defeat the ends of justice. The alternative granted him by the court—a $3,500 fine—leaves much to be desired if a telling blow is to be struck at this type of crime.

But the misrepresentation which is particularly objectionable is that which would lead other sections, uninformed by fact, to see Southern agriculture, with emphasis on Arkansas, as a hotbed of peonage, with sharecroppers virtual slaves. The South has not reached its present place of agricultural, yea, and industrial prestige, by such custom, any more than other sections progressed through lawlessness of the various types without common consent, but not always without general knowledge—practiced for their own aggrandizement.

Arkansans themselves are first to hail the Peacher conviction as justice visited upon an individual who has violated a primary law. If the sentence is carried out, it should end the practice charged to him, which was that he had appropriated the services and labor of men—convicted of a misdemeanor for his own purposes.

The shadow of one individual cannot blot a state. If it could, the terrific darkness would be nation-wide. **For each has its offenders.**

Arkansas.

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

Rome, Ga. News-Tribune
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For a people, a majority of whom are so sympathetic, to be put in the light of practicing gross impositions upon helpless persons is outrageous. Yet the cure lies with the very element of Southern society which suffers most under accusations of this nature. These sympathetic and right-thinking persons can and should prevent practices of every nature that smack of unfair dealing of any kind in relation to the negro.

This is a responsibility that cannot be avoided without unfortunate results and is an obligation that should be performed, not only as an act of justice, but as an expression of the kindly impulses toward the weak that are so pronounced among the majority of white persons in the South.

Tuscaloosa, Ala., News
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THE peonage case that has arisen in Arkansas is a disgrace to that commonwealth and a reflection upon the entire South, because similar conditions undoubtedly have arisen in other quarters at times.

Developments of this nature serve to impose a special obligation upon the people of the South in relation to the negro, who, as a rule, is the victim of such miscarriages of justice.

To be unfair to the negro is an impulse that is entirely foreign to the average Southerner. As a general proposition his attitude is to be more sympathetic toward the negro than any other element of the citizenship because of his disadvantages. This is proved by the fact that practically every negro, however low his station, usually has some "white folks" upon whom he can call in times of trouble with the certainty that aid will be extended.

For a people, a majority of whom are so sympathetic, to be put in the light of practicing gross impositions upon helpless persons is outrageous. Yet the cure lies with the very element of Southern society which suffers most under accusations of this nature. These sympathetic and right-thinking persons can and should prevent practices of every nature that smack of unfair dealing of any kind in relation to the negro.

This is a responsibility that cannot be avoided without unfortunate results and is an obligation that should be performed, not only as an act of justice, but as an expression of the kindly impulses toward the weak that are so pronounced among the majority of white persons in the South.

Selma, Ala. Times
December 1, 1936

## A BLOW AT PEONAGE

An echo from Civil War days is heard in Arkansas, where the first conviction is secured under the law of 1866 which forbids slavery and peonage. The Farm Tenants Union hails the conviction as the harbinger of a new emancipation.

Facts in the case: Paul L. Peacher, town marshal of Earle, Ark., is found guilty of having several negroes falsely arrested on charges of vagrancy in the course of a farm-labor strike and condemning them to work out fines by labor on his own farm. A fine of $3,500 is imposed on Mr. Peacher and a two-year prison term, the latter to be suspended if the fine is paid.

Officials of the Farm Tenants Union prepare for a celebration as its secretary, H. L. Mitchell, issues this statement:

"Activities of Peacher represented the worst type of intimidation practiced against tenants and sharecroppers. His conviction should be a step toward ending lawlessness and intimidation on the part of officers and landlords in East Arkansas. Other cases similar to that of Peacher will be pressed vigorously. Such cases will take the form of damage suits against individual persons rather than criminal procedures."

Nashville, Tenn. Tennessean—M'ng
November 27, 1936

## Arkansas Slavery.

When an Arkansas city marshal is convicted by an Arkansas jury on charges of holding seven negroes in slavery, it is reasonable to assume that there has been no miscarriage of justice.

In charging the jury at Jonesboro, Ark., a federal district judge declared that every circumstance pointed to the guilt of City Marshal Paul D. Peacher, in his opinion, and added:

"This is not a lone case in Arkansas. It occurs frequently and it ought to be stopped."

By what means did this man clothed in authority bring seven negroes to a status held by a judge and jury to be slavery? By the simple expedient of rounding them up on charges of vagrancy, despite the fact that they did not merit that status, and hauling them before a convenient justice of the peace where sentence was quickly imposed. By some convenient arrangement the prisoners were then turned over to Peacher to work out their sentence on his farm.

Eleven business men and one farmer, composing the jury, were convinced that this did not merely happen, but that it was a well planned method of getting free labor. But, although finding Peacher guilty on all counts, justifying a sentence of two years in the penitentiary and a fine of $3,500, their recommendation of clemency and specification that the defendant be not imprisoned, clears the way for a probation status for the farmer-marshal if the fine is paid.

Nevertheless, an important step has been taken toward breaking up a practice that is perhaps not confined to the state of Arkansas. There have been peonage scandals in the South before, it must be regretfully admitted. But where the press is willing to expose conditions and where the courts are determined to punish violations, the end is in sight for such perversion of the processes of law.

Arkansas has come in for much unfavorable publicity of late over farm tenantry, but in this case there was no relationship to that confused social problem. Defense attorneys who tried to link the two failed utterly in their purpose.

The victims of a corrupt local system were merely hard working men, seemingly without influence and friends. It developed, however, that the federal government was ready and willing to stand behind them in the fight for their constitutional rights, and the result should be gratifying to all.

If this was not an isolated case in Arkansas, as the judge observed, it is to be hoped that there will be no delay in clearing up the others

Nashville, Tenn. Banner
November 28, 1936

## ARKANSAS EXONERATED

While conviction of Paul D. Peacher, Arkansas cotton planter and city marshal, on the charge of enslaving seven Negroes turned over to his tender care upon being found guilty of vagrancy, proves that Peacher did just that, and perhaps demonstrates by implication that the practice was not entirely new either to him or others in a like position, it also clarifies the status of the charges brought, and exonerates Arkansans as a whole who have been unjustly accused of practising peonage as a policy traditional to the sharecrop system.

**Peacher's conviction is just, on the basis of the evidence. At the same time, it is well to bring out the facts of the case, lack of which has stigmatized the fair name of Arkansas wherever irresponsible talemongers have sought by deliberate misrepresentation to picture that State and its neighbors as indulging peonage and related evils wholly violative of humane laws and principles.**

There is no brief for those who exploit the ignorant or helpless, whether such exploitation occurs in the South, the North, the East or the West. No sympathies will be stirred for Peacher or others of his ilk, and failure to serve out his term, or an escape by payment of a fine, will be to defeat the ends of justice. The alternative granted him by the court—a $3,500 fine—leaves much to be desired if a telling blow is to be struck at this type of crime.

But the misrepresentation which is particularly objectionable is that which would lead other sections, uninformed by fact, to see Southern agriculture, with emphasis on Arkansas, as a hotbed of peonage, with sharecroppers virtual slaves. The South has not reached its present place of agricultural, yea and industrial prestige, by such custom, any more than other sections progressed through lawlessness of the various types individuals—without common consent, but not always without general knowledge—practiced for their own aggrandizement.

Arkansans themselves are first to hail the Peacher conviction as justice visited upon an individual who has violated a primary law. If the sentence is carried out, it should end the practice charged to him, which was that he had appropriated the services and labor of men convicted of a misdemeanor for his own purposes.

The shadow of one individual cannot blot a state. If it could, the terrific darkness would be nation-wide. **For each has its offenders.**

Chattanooga, Tenn. News
November 26, 1936

## Southern Slavery in Modern Times

ALL the evils and crudities of the Southern prison and farm tenancy systems are epitomized in the case of Paul Peacher, former City Marshal of Earle, Ark., who was yesterday convicted of slave holding. Peacher, as city marshal, would round up Negroes, take them before the mayor who also was Justice of the Peace. The mayor would sentence them, and Peacher would take them off to work on his farm.

He was sentenced to $3.500 fine and two years in prison by a District Federal Judge.

His Negro "slaves" were witnesses against him as narrated in correspondence to the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* from the trial of Peacher.

The stories told by the Negroes were epitomized in the testimony of Winfield Anderson, a Negro who owns his own home, and was arrested there by Peacher last May on a day when the deputy sheriff was rounding up Negroes. At that time the cotton choppers' strike was in progress, but no mention of it has been made in this trial.

Anderson said he was sitting on his porch when Peacher drove up and asked: "Where do you work?" When the Negro replied he was not doing anything, Peacher ordered: "Get into this car." They drove to the jail, Anderson said, picking up another Negro on the way and the Negroes remained there for two days without food save that brought by friends. Anderson said Peacher answered a request for food by saying, "Sharpen your teeth and gnaw the bars," adding that they would get all the food they wanted "when I get you on the farm."

Two days after being jailed, the witness said, the thirteen Negroes in jail were lined up, taken to an adjoining room, fined $25 and sentenced to thirty days on the farm by Mayor Mitchell.

The prisoners were taken to the farm, locked in a barred bunkhouse, kept under armed guards. They were fed there and put to work next ay clearing timber.

Norfolk, Va. Pilot
November 30, 19
1936

## Arkansas Shares in the Blame

The weight of the condemnation in the slavery case in Arkansas has fallen upon the town marshal of Jonesboro, Paul D. Peacher, who arrested Negroes on a charge of vagrancy, took them for trial before the Mayor, T. S. Mitchell, and then, after they had been convicted and sentenced, worked them on his own farm. To deal with this kind of dirty business a Federal anti-slavery statute of 1866 had to be dug up. Peacher was tried under it in Federal court—incidentally with a presiding Federal judge, John E. Martineau, who seemed to have his dander up—and was convicted in seven cases. In each he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment, the sentences to run concurrently, but the judge put him on probation and probably he won't have to serve time. A fine of $3,500, however, stands.

Such a smacking blow ought to have a healthy effect on the town marshal. The chances are that at least he will not again use the law to enslave labor which he ought to buy in the open market.

But the matter ought not to rest there. The State of Arkansas still has some work to do. Though the anti-slavery statute of 1866 is undoubtedly effective against a town marshal who looks around for free farm hands, arrests a few Negroes, and has them sentenced to work on his own farm, it is still not certain whether the statute would cover all cases that may arise under this system. The system itself is wrong, and the system is the responsibility of the State of Arkansas.

Cracking down on one man who is exploiting human beings for his personal profit is excellent. But the real job is to crack down on the Arkansas code which permits this exploitation. The mess will not be cleaned up until the Arkansas Governor and the Arkansas legislature remove the possibility of this form of slavery ever cropping up again.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions

Arkansas.

## ARKANSAS OFFICER INDICTED AS SLAVER

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LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Oct.--(CNA)- Indictment of a city marshall on charges of holding laborers in slavery gave impetus last week to the campaign of labor and liberal organizations seeking to bring before the country the facts of the existence of peonage and slavery throughout the cotton belt.

Crusader News Agency

Paul D. Peacher, planter and city marshal at Earle, Ark., was indicted by a federal grand jury on a charge of violating a slavery statute of 1867, specifically with aiding and abetting "in holding in slavery" eight Negro laborers he arrested during a cotton choppers' strike last May. A few hours before the federal grandy jury completed its investigation, the Crittenden County grand jury (Earle is a part of Crittenden) returned a report completely whitewashing peoange and terrorism in that county. Peacher is a former Crittenden county deputy sheriff. 10-5-36 New York, N.Y.

"We have not found evidence of any violations of the law in any instances," the County grand jury reported.

Peacher, , target of frequent ciriticism from officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, posted $2,500 bond after he was served with papers in the indictment returned against him. He refused to discuss the charges.

Peacher is accused of falsely arresting eight laborers on vagrancy charges during the plantation workers' strike and inducing Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle to sentence them to work for him. Mitchell sentenced each to pay a $25 fine or serve 30 days on Peacher's farm. It is one of those "fine old Southern customs."

U.S. District Attorney Fred A. Isrig, who owns a plantation himself, said Mayor Mitchell was absolved of blame because the grand jury felt he "acted innocently."

Governor J. M. Futrell pardoned the eight men when they had served 20 days because, he said, he thought they had "been punished enough." Federal agents B. L. Damron and Champan Fletcher, who investigated the case, told the grand jury that the menwere arrested illegally.

The Federal investigation followed protests by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the American Federation of Labor, International Labor Defense, American Civil Liberties Union and the Communist and Socialist parties, that kidnapings, floggings and murder were being used by Arkansas planters to break the laborers strike and keep workers in forced servitude.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, the organization that led the strike, plans to demand extension of the Federal probe to half a dozen other states. Officials of the union chargod that in Mississippi local officers of the WPA are helping plantation owners to force men and women into the fields at sub-standard wages by refusing them food on any other terms.

The union, and other organizations interested in improving the miserable lot of the croppers, base their charges of peonage and slavery on the system of land owners paying the State for use of prisoners, generally arrested without cause by sheriffs on demand, and upon the practice of most plantations of compelling share croppers and transient laborers to buy supplies from plantation stores. Prices in the stores are so nicely balanced against wages, the union charges, that laborers are always kept in debt and thus are forced to remain on the plantation. If they attempt to escape they are recaptured like runaway slaves and charged with evading debt.

# 'PEONAGE' STAMP PROBE ASSAILED

Advertiser

## Farm Union Leaders Deny Violating Provisions Of Mail Statutes

10-30-36

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Oct. 29.—(AP)— U. S. District Attorney Fred A. Isgrig and officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union differed sharply today over the intent and legality of circular letters sent out from New York offering for sale a so-called "Arkansas centennial peonage stamp."

Montgomery, Ala.

Announcing he was asking for an investigation by the Postoffice Department in Washington, Isgrig alleged that distribution of the circular "is a violation of the Federal statute against improper use of the mails." He said the letters bore the address of the Workers Defense League of New York and that the letterhead carried the name of H. L. Mitchell, Memphis, secretary of the tenant union.

The stamp offered for sale had as its central design the nude figures of a negro and white man hanging by chained hands. It bore the inscription "celebrate Arkansas centennial—end peonage."

Isgrig charged the circular "very definitely" sought to sell the stamps for the benefit of a fund to aid in the prosecution of Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earle, Ark., awaiting trial on a Federal indictment charging him with violation of anti-slavery statutes. The district attorney said such prosecution would be conducted exclusively by the government and that regulations prohibited participation of privately-employed counsel in criminal cases.

"Not one dime is needed or can be used by the collectors of the solicited fund or anyone else to aid in this prosecution," he said.

Replying, officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union issued a statement at Memphis saying a letter had been circulated in the union's behalf by the Workers' Defense League but that Isgrig "wholly misinterpreted the purpose of this letter."

The union denied any solicitation of funds to aid in the Peacher case and said the league had been soliciting funds "for the defense of union members involved in Arkansas litigation."

"The letter sent out by the Workers' Defense League stated that a fund of $8,000 for defense and bail must be raised immediately if we are to aid in the struggle against slavery carried on so valiantly by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union," said the union statement.

"These people have found themselves

on a 'hot spot' and are trying to back out," Isgrig commented. "I will ask an immediate investigation by the postal authorities."

He asserted that "peonage and slavery do not exist in Arkansas."

# ISGRIG ASKS INQUIRY INTO PEONAGE STAMP

## District Attorney Seeks Aid of Postal Officials

## DENIES SLAVERY EXISTS

### Tenant Farmers Union Differs Sharply With Prosecutor—Leaders Say Letter of Solicitation Misinterpreted

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Oct. 29.—United States District Attorney Fred A. Isgrig and officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union differed sharply today over the intent and legality of circular letters sent out from New York offering for sale a so-called "Arkansas Centennial peonage stamp."

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**Nude Figures**

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H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, said yesterday U. S. District Attorney Fred Isgrig had misinterpreted the meaning and purpose of letters seeking financial aid for prosecution of a peonage charge in East Arkansas and that demand for a federal investigation was unjustified.

Isgrig asked the Department of Justice to investigate letters and "Arkansas peonage stamps" which sought funds to aid in the prosecution of Paul D. Peacher, marshal at Earle, Ark., who is under federal indictment on charges of "holding and abetting in slavery."

"Isgrig wholly misinterpreted the purpose of the letters," Mitchell said. "The league only sought to arouse public opinion in connection with the Peacher case.

"Isgrig's statement about the league and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union raising money for the prosecution of the case is an insult to the intelligence of the signers."

Mitchell said money raised would be used to aid in handling about 20 cases involving union members in East Arkansas.

# Well Done, Governor

Governor Futrell of Arkansas scores a bull's-eye by inviting the governors of all 48 states to attend in person or to send delegates to a national conference to consider farm tenancy at Hot Springs on Nov. 30. As the governor says, tenancy is a national problem. All that is necessary to establish that fact is to consult the agricultural census of 1935. Tenancy is too prevalent in nearly every agricultural region or subregion.

But even the census doesn't reveal the full extent of the land tenure problem in America. Actual tenancy and absentee ownership are often concealed by a fictitious ownership of land in fee by the farm operator, accompanied by obligations that purport to be mortgages or loans, but in fact confer absolute control of the farmer's business upon the creditor. That sort of thing is common in many of the great irrigation districts of the west and even in the corn belt, where chain farming under the auspices of mortgage loan companies has been a growing practice since the panic of 1929. On the Pacific coast we have a problem even more menacing. Gang farming of the most vicious type prevails in many regions where crops are grown under so-called "farm-factory" conditions by Mexican and Oriental labor. We think of the sweatshop as a phase of the factory system. But the agrarian sweatshop is in full flower in sugar beet regions and in many areas devoted to the growing of vegetables and fruits.

If tenancy were only found where great export crops like tobacco and cotton are grown, it would be a national problem nevertheless, because land tenure and agricultural standards of living are determined by the market conditions created by the operation of our tariff system—a system based upon discrimination against agriculture. Farm problems know nothing of state lines or sectional differences. Governor Futrell does a service both to the south and to the nation in bringing that fact to the front.

WOULD STERILIZE
ARKANSAS CROPPERS

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Nov.—(CNA)- Governor J. Marion Futrell's commission of 60, charged with the duty of inquiring into farm tenancy in Arkansas and of reporting whether, in its judgement, the plight of the sharecropper could properly be made a matter of concern to the public authority or whether it should be left again in the hands of Providence, is presumably pondering several proposals.

At least one member of the commission itself, A. Carlson, of Truman, eastern Arkansas lumberman, has made a very concrete proposal. He proposes, somewhat tentatively, that sterilization of the sharecroppers might be the correct solution to the problem.

The proposal has been informally endorsed by the Little Rock Y. M. C. A. Breakfast Club. How sterilized sharecroppers would produce children to pick the next generation's cotton - or operate cotton-picking machines - has not been made clear by either Carlson or his admirers.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1936
Labor Conditions.


DUBUQUE, IA.
**TELEGRAPH HERALD**

JUN 18 1936


## South's Share Croppers

Tales of more floggings come out of Arkansas where social workers from the north are helping to organize strikes of "croppers" who are demanding $1.50 per day instead of 75 cents for 10 hours' work. Sherwood Eddy says that all of the union organizers have been beaten, mistreated in various ways, or have barely escaped with their lives.

It does take a lot of courage to attempt to organize the share croppers on southern plantations because conception of the rights of labor in many parts of the south are still not much further advanced than they were before the Civil war.

In the deep south the Negroes have no rights,—or very few. Slavery has been abolished in name but goes on much as it did before the war, except that the planter is not obligated to care for workers in their old age as was the case during slave times.

The average wage on a southern plantation is $100 per year and the workers are habitually in debt to the plantation store where they buy goods at high prices. The actual cash handled in a year by a plantation worker is negligible.

During the strike now in progress Negroes are arrested unceremoniously on charges such as "inciting to riot" and "enticing labor." After being arrested and fined the Negroes are compelled to work on the plantations.

Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate for president, has sent a message to Mr. Roosevelt appealing to him, "not only as President of the United States but as head of a great political party, to act in this monstrous perversion of everything decent in the American tradition."

It is difficult to see how the government could act against such lawlessness unless share-croppers were herded across state lines. It would be very difficult, indeed, to get their cases before a federal court and needless to say all state courts and officers are in sympathy with the prevailing thought in that region. The social workers who have attempted to aid the Negroes are just as helpless as those they seek to aid.

The famous Fourteenth amendment, with its even more famous "due process" clause, was enacted to protect the rights of emancipated Negroes. It is probably the height of irony that Negro share-croppers are being illegally held under arrest and forced to labor, while the only recent use made of the Fourteenth amendment was to annul New York state's minimum wage law for women,—thereby forcing them to work for less than 31 cents an hour.

While under our peculiar system of government little can be done nationally for the share croppers,—who seem to be the genuine forgotten men of the nation,—leaders of both the Republican and Democratic parties can and should go strongly on record against such injustices.


GREENSBORO, N. C.
**RECORD**

JUN 18 1936


### Blots.

While Congress is permitting to die by default and lack of time any federal anti-lynching law, it behooves men and women who feel some responsibility for the lives and welfare of fellow humans of another race to take a look at two exhibits collected from this week's newspapers.

In Arkansas a search was being made for the body of Frank Weems, negro tenant, who his son said died of injuries received when he was beaten with baseball bats when a mob broke up a sharecroppers' meeting near Earle, Ark. The sheriff at Earle denied knowledge of Weems death, which seemed to be confirmed by the fact that his relatives were planning a funeral.

Near Hemingway, S. C., Willie Johnston, negro who came to town to pay an installment on his automobile, was taken in charge by a group of men, shot, clubbed and left to die on the banks of a nearby lake. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict that the negro had come to his death at the hands of unknown persons.

Congress could have passed a dozen anti-lynching laws and still these tragedies might have taken place. But there is a feeling among a great group of people that as dear to the American's heart as is local self government, a wholesome investigation by disinterested agents of such blots on the public conscience as these reported in South Carolina and Arkansas during the past few days would tend to discourage such violence in the future and is it too much to hope that some of the mobsters might even be caught, identified and punished?

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The AP's photo service sends to its customers a picture of Italy's new "mechanical army" being reviewed by King Victor Emanuel. It seems eminently fitting and proper that Mussolini's head man robot should give the other robots the once over. Everybody in Italy is a yes-man, under penalty of death or banishment, except the bull-necked dictator; and even he is compelled to be one, on occasion, as, for example, when he holds conversations with the nations he fears, and, perhaps, with Mrs. Mussolini and her mother.

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### A Convention.

President Roosevelt is about to become Candidate Roosevelt in an official way. His constituents, the American people, of course have known ever since before he made his inaugural address March 4, 1933, that barring tragedy or mishap which upon occasion in the past has overtaken national leaders, he would be a candidate for re-nomination in the fall. The time for that convention is upon the party.

There is not within the country certainly not within the Democratic party, a single person, be he for or against the new deal who doubts that Mr. Roosevelt will be the party's No. 1 candidate again. For confirmation of this sure prophecy one has but to look at the state Democratic conventions which have already instructed their delegates. There is also the matter of Mr. Roosevelt's unofficial campaigning which he has already accomplished, including his most recent western speaking tour of 4,000 miles. He is now preparing his speech of acceptance which will be delivered when the Philadelphia assembly of Democrats hands him the nomination and the ovation that goes with it. It is customary party procedure, this matter of renominating for a second term and this time the leadership has been such that there is no question of what is inevitable at Philadelphia.

And yet despite an outcome that is a foregone conclusion, despite the fact that the people think they know what big things will happen, the convention and its nomination will be big news. There is a matter of a platform, the reaction of the President in his speech of acceptance. Will there be any new policies enunciated? Any old ones expounded? It will be the Democratic party responsible for the administration of the national government for the past four years in convention assembled. And as such it deserves the attention of thoughtful citizens.

# ARKANSAS COTTON 'STRIKE' IS ENDED

## Official Close Leaves Charges Of Floggings, Other Violence

MEMPHIS, TENN., July 9.—(AP)—The "general strike" among east Arkansas farm laborers was declared at an end today, leaving charges of floggings and other violence in its wake.

Even as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union announced the walkout over and claimed the strike a success, peace officers of Crittenden, St. Francis and Cross Counties in the affected area—denied a strike ever existed.

Still pending were the charges by Willie Sue Blagden, 29-year-old Memphis social worker, and the Rev. Claude C. Williams, of Little Rock, that they were flogged with a leather harness strap at Earle a few weeks ago when they went there to investigate the purported death of Frank Weems, 40, a negro sharecropper, from a "beating."

They went, they said, for the purpose of holding Weems' funeral, if he could be found, and were set upon by six men, beaten and sent out of town. H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, said attorneys for the union are now considering possible civil suits.

Sheriff Howard Curlin, of Crittenden County, said Miss Blagden and Williams have never placed their complaints before him, and he added that he was "positive" Weems would be found alive, and unharmed.

"I'll find Weems," Curlin said today.

The strike call, issued May 25, originally involved cotton choppers, but was expanded to include sympathetic share croppers and tenant farmers. Wages of $1.50 for a 10-hour day were demanded, instead of the 75 cents the union claimed was paid.

Mitchell claimed today that "over a wide area, we won an average wage of $1 per day for labor," and "in some counties, we won $1.25 for a 10-hour day."

The strike, he said, not only brought higher wages for thousands, but demonstrated "that negro and white workers in the cotton fields have become aware of their common interests, and are willing to get together and fight for them."

The union said the strikers "refused to resort to violence" against "the violence of the planters and their political aides."

"The strike is only the beginning of the struggle of the disinherited to come into their own—we appeal for continued aid in this struggle," said the union.

"It's comical," commented Sheriff Curlin when informed of Mitchell's announcement. "There hasn't been a strike. Farm labor has been plentiful. No planter has been handicapped."

Sheriff C. M. Stacy, of Cross County, likewise denied a strike ever existed there, and said "there isn't anything to Mitchell's announcement."

Similar expressions were made by officers and planters of St. Francis County.

Developments that followed the union's organization included the arrest and fining of Ward Rodgers, 24, a former FERA instructor, whose case later was dismissed by the State while appeal was pending in Circuit Court.

Norman Thomas, Socialist party candidate for president, charged he was once escorted out of an east Arkansas county where he went in the interest of the sharecroppers.

## COTTON 'STRIKE' ENDS IN EAST ARKANSAS

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 9.—(AP)—The "general strike" among tenant farmers, sharecroppers and day laborers in east Arkansas was ended today by declaration of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, declared that the strike had been successful in forcing "higher wages for thousands of day laborers," and in demonstrating that negro and white workers in the cotton fields have become aware of their common interests, and are willing to get together and fight for them."

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

DUBUQUE, IA.
TELEGRAPH HERALD

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Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate for president, has sent a message to Mr. Roosevelt appealing to him, "not only as President of the United States but as head of a great political party, to act in this monstrous perversion of everything decent in the American tradition."

It is difficult to see how the government could act against such lawlessness unless share-croppers were herded across state lines. It would be very difficult, indeed, to get their cases before a federal court and needless to say all state courts and officers are in sympathy with the prevailing thought in that region. The social workers who have attempted to aid the Negroes are just as helpless as those they seek to aid.

The famous Fourteenth amendment, with its even more famous "due process" clause, was enacted to protect the rights of emancipated Negroes. It is probably the height of irony that Negro share-croppers are being illegally held under arrest and forced to labor, while the only recent use made of the Fourteenth amendment was to annul New York state's minimum wage law for women,—thereby forcing them to work for less than 31 cents an hour.

While under our peculiar system of government little can be done nationally for the share croppers,—who seem to be the genuine forgotten men of the nation,—leaders of both the Republican and Democratic parties can and should go strongly on record against such injustices.

GREENSBORO, N. C.
RECORD

JUN 18 1936

## Blots.

While Congress is permitting to die by default and lack of time any federal anti-lynching law, it behooves men and women who feel some responsibility for the lives and welfare of fellow humans of another race to take a look at two exhibits collected from this week's newspapers.

In Arkansas a search was being made for the body of Frank Weems, negro tenant, who his son said died of injuries received when he was beaten with baseball bats when a mob broke up a sharecroppers' meeting near Earle, Ark. The sheriff at Earle denied knowledge of Weems death, which seemed to be confirmed by the fact that his relatives were planning a funeral.

Near Hemingway, S. C., Willie Johnston, negro who came to town to pay an installment on his automobile, was taken in charge by a group of men, shot, clubbed and left to die on the banks of a nearby lake. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict that the negro had come to his death at the hands of unknown persons.

Congress could have passed a dozen anti-lynching laws and still these tragedies might have taken place. But there is a feeling among a great group of people that as dear to the American's heart as is local self government, a wholesome investigation by disinterested agents of such blots on the public conscience as these reported in South Carolina and Arkansas during the past few days would tend to discourage such violence in the future and is it too much to hope that some of the mobsters might even be caught, identified and punished?

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The AP's photo service sends to its customers a picture of Italy's new "mechanical army" being reviewed by King Victor Emanuel. It seems eminently fitting and proper that Mussolini's head man robot should give the other robots the once over. Everybody in Italy is a yes-man, under penalty of death or banishment, except the bull-necked dictator; and even he is compelled to be one, on occasion, as, for example, when he holds conversations with the nations he fears, and, perhaps, with Mrs. Mussolini and her mother.

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## A Convention.

President Roosevelt is about to become Candidate Roosevelt in an official way. His constituents, the American people, of course have known ever since before he made his inaugural address March 4, 1933, that barring tragedy or mishap which upon occasion in the past has overtaken national leaders, he would be a candidate for re-nomination in the fall. The time for that convention is upon the party.

There is not within the country certainly not within the Democratic party, a single person, be he for or against the new deal who doubts that Mr. Roosevelt will be the party's No. 1 candidate again. For confirmation of this sure prophecy one has but to look at the state Democratic conventions which have already instructed their delegates. There is also the matter of Mr. Roosevelt's unofficial campaigning which he has already accomplished, including his most recent western speaking tour of 4,000 miles. He is now preparing his speech of acceptance which will be delivered when the Philadelphia assembly of Democrats hands him the nomination and the ovation that goes with it. It is customary party procedure, this matter of renominating for a second term and this time the leadership has been such that there is no question of what is inevitable at Philadelphia.

And yet despite an outcome that is a foregone conclusion, despite the fact that the people think they know what big things will happen, the convention and its nomination will be big news. There is a matter of a platform, the reaction of the President in his speech of acceptance. Will there be any new policies enunciated? Any old ones expounded? It will be the Democratic party responsible for the administration of the national government for the past four years in convention assembled. And as such it deserves the attention of thoughtful citizens.

# ARKANSAS COTTON 'STRIKE' IS ENDED

## Official Close Leaves Charges Of Floggings, Other Violence

MEMPHIS, TENN., July 9.—(AP)—The "general strike" among east Arkansas farm laborers was declared at an end today, leaving charges of floggings and other violence in its wake.

Even as the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union announced the walkout over and claimed the strike a success, peace officers of Crittenden, St. Francis and Cross Counties, the affected area—denied a strike ever existed.

Still pending were the charges by Willie Sue Blagden, 29-year-old Memphis social worker, and the Rev. Claude C. Williams, of Little Rock, that they were flogged with a leather harness strap at Earle a few weeks ago when they went there to investigate the purported death of Frank Weems, 40, a negro sharecropper, from a "beating."

They went, they said, for the purpose of holding Weems' funeral, if he could be found, and were set upon by six men, beaten and sent out of town. H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, said attorneys for the union are now considering possible civil suits.

Sheriff Howard Curlin, of Crittenden County, said Miss Blagden and Williams have never placed their complaints before him, and he added that he was "positive" Weems would be found alive, and unharmed.

"I'll find Weems," Curlin said today.

The strike call, issued May 25, originally involved cotton choppers, but was expanded to include sympathetic share croppers and tenant farmers. Wages of $1.50 for a 10-hour day were demanded, instead of the 75 cents the union claimed was paid.

Mitchell claimed today that "over a wide area, we won an average wage of $1 per day for labor," and "in some counties, we won $1.25 for a 10-hour day."

The strike, he said, not only brought higher wages for thousands, but demonstrated "that negro and white workers in the cotton fields have become aware of their common interests, and are willing to get together and fight for them."

The union said the strikers "refused to resort to violence" against "the violence of the planters and their political aides."

"The strike is only the beginning of the struggle of the disinherited to come into their own—we appeal for continued aid in this struggle," said the union.

"It's comical," commented Sheriff Curlin when informed of Mitchell's announcement. "There hasn't been a strike. Farm labor has been plentiful. No planter has been handicapped."

Sheriff C. M. Stacy, of Cross County, likewise denied a strike ever existed there, and said "there isn't anything to Mitchell's announcement."

Similar expressions were made by officers and planters of St. Francis County.

Developments that followed the union's organization included the arrest and fining of Ward Rodgers, 24, a former FERA instructor, whose case later was dismissed by the State while appeal was pending in Circuit Court.

Norman Thomas, Socialist party candidate for president, charged he was once escorted out of an east Arkansas county where he went in the interest of the sharecroppers.

# COTTON 'STRIKE' ENDS IN EAST ARKANSAS

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 9.—(AP)—The "general strike" among tenant farmers, sharecroppers and day laborers in east Arkansas was ended today by declaration of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, declared that the strike had been successful in forcing "higher wages for thousands of day laborers," and in demonstrating that negro and white workers in the cotton fields have become aware of their common interests, and are willing to get together and fight for them."

# He Goes There as a Bible Salesman

## Arkansas in Terror Because Laborers Ask 15-cent-an-Hour Wage Instead of 7 Cents

EDITOR'S NOTE

*Flogging of women and men of both races, reported use of violence by white landowners to prevent colored and white sharecroppers from coming together and enforcing their demands for a 15-cent-an-hour wage, caused the AFRO to send a reporter into bloody Arkansas.*

*The landowners are holding out for a 7-cent-an-hour wage.*

Staff Correspondence

EARLE, Ark. — All that I know of slavery is what I have read, but from what I have seen here in Arkansas during my investigation of the sharecroppers' situation I am convinced that the slavery abolished by the immortal Lincoln was a mild form of oppression and exploitation when compared with this modern form employed by the land owners of Arkansas.

**As I drove through Crittenden County in Eastern Arkansas this week my blood curdled. On either side of the road as far as the natural eye could see were plantation tenant huts. In the large level fields were colored men and women by the hundreds working under the watchful eye of a plantation foreman. They were chopping cotton and beans. Some of the men were cultivating with mules. It was a scene to behold.**

When I arrived at Leigh on Route 70, I inquired about the distance to Earle, the town where wholesale murder and floggings are reported to have been perpetrated. A laborer smiled: "Brother, if you think anything of your life you'd better not go up to Earle."

**Into Earle**

After obtaining the information I sought I went on through Vincent and Crawfordsville into Earle. When I reached the city limits a large sign informed me that Earle has a population of two thousand inhabitants. I later learned that the majority of the residents are colored.

**Since I had received so many warnings not to enter the town, and had heard of the floggings of other investigators, I decided to go in as a distributor of Bible and Sunday school literature instead of a reporter on the world's leading colored weekly. I did not feel that the land owners were all atheists and they might not be as hard on a Bible distributor as they were on others. I was informed that they had flogged a minister on his way to preach a funeral. Nevertheless, I took a chance.**

The first likely source of information that I approached told me that she wasn't interested in Bibles and Sunday school literature and knew nothing about the murder and floggings of sharecroppers; that the only thing she knew was that "I wanta git the hell outa heah."

**Pastor Is Mum Too**

My second prospect was the pastor of the CME Church. His scrutinizing glance convinced me that I would have to be something more than a disseminator of Bible and Sunday school literature to get the information I wanted out of him. I became frank. He blinked a couple of times and then explained.

**"Son, I've been here 'bout ah week. I'd like to stay heah and pastor this church, therefore, I ain't aiming to give out any information."**

He turned, however, called a roughly attired gentleman who wore no shoes and whose feet were calloused. He is the community school teacher. Learning that I was from Baltimore, he spilled plenty, but during the conversation while dropping one valuable bit of information after another he continued to remind me that he didn't know anything about the situation; that the white folk looked upon him as being better than the rank and file, and of course, he planned to stay on the good side of them.

**No Union Wanted**

The crux of the entire sharecropper situation, I gleaned, is a determined effort on the part of the land owners to prevent colored and white sharecroppers from organizing themselves together to better their own living conditions. The land owners, of course, would not be able to oppress and exploit them if they formed a union.

**The reason that the colored sharecroppers have not banded themselves together is every time the croppers call a meeting and attempt to organize, some one present slips out and notifies "Old Boss," and Old Boss begins beating heads, and the effort to organize does not materialize because of fear.**

For instance, in the case of Frank Weems, who was alleged to have been murdered this week, his sons say he is home suffering from barbed-wire scratches. No one has been able to see Mr. Weems. It is being whispered around that Old Boss told those boys they had better say it or else.

**They Won't Talk to Strangers**

It is indeed difficult for anyone to help these sharecroppers because they are afraid to and just won't talk.

**I approached a man today whose head was swarthed in bandages. This was the remaining evidence of a recent flogging. When I asked how the white folks are treating the sharecroppers, he replied: "I don't know nuffin 'bout de others, but dey treat me jest fine. I'se bin wid my boss nine years."**

BANGOR, ME.

NEWS

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## The New Slavery

Mr. Roosevelt's solicitude for the "under-privileged" seems not to extend to the share-croppers and tenant farmers of the South, whose pitiful plight and savage abuse makes the slavery of old seem like paradise. The President's impassioned pleadings for the rights of "the common man" sound hollow and hypocritical when we hear from the Earl (Arkansas) Enterprise this defense of the new slavery:

> Tenants are all on the job and day laborers are plentiful and glad to work for seventy-five cents a day, instead of $1.50 demanded by the union. It is true that a few foreign agitators representing the Southern Tenant Farmers Union have felt the strong sting of a back-band applied where it would do the most good. This method has produced results where all other remedies less drastic have failed.

Concerning the flogging of a woman, the Enterprise reports that opinion varies as to the wisdom thereof. For itself it confesses difficulty in condoning that act, although it does believe that the woman was completely out of her place; that assisting at a Negro funeral, even a mock Negro funeral, is "no job for a white woman in the South." Nevertheless its major premise still stands—that beating objectors with heavy straps is an ideal way of bringing content to the discontented, of keeping the cotton fields of Crittenden county free from "foreigners," including citizens of other States in the Federal Union.

Harold Moffsommer, who interviewed 800 cotton landlords in 1934, reported that the economic relationship between landlord and cropper had brought about a situation in which it was difficult, if not impossible, for the government to deal directly with the cropper. Paternalism of planters, dependency of tenants jealously maintained, stern objections by landlords to any change in the traditional relationship—expressed, says Hoffsommer, by 90 per cent of those with whom he talked—have set up well nigh insurmountable barriers to improvement. The Vance Commission reported that over 60 per cent of those producing cotton are tenants, that tenancy is steadily increasing, that more than a third of tenants are croppers, that the fixed policy of exploiting the Negro has been carried over to the white cropper, that tenants are habitually badly fed, badly housed, badly treated and reduced to the barest necessaries of existence.

If the government cannot do anything about this, and if planters will not, shall the croppers be allowed to organize among themselves for their own betterment? Shall outsiders be permitted to come in and advise them how?

Those questions might well engage the earnest attention of a man who has undertaken to remake America and who only last Saturday was expressing deep satisfaction with his success. Thus:

> The brave and clear platform adopted by this convention, to which I hearitly subscribe, sets forth that government in a modern civilization has certain inescapable obligations to its citizens, among which are protection of the family and the home, the establishment of a democracy of opportunity, and aid to those overtaken by disaster.
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> Today we stand committed to the proposition that freedom is no half and half affair.
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> If the average citizen is guaranteed equal opportunity in the polling place, he must have equal opportunity in the market place.

While the "great humanitarian in Washington," as Governor Brann describes him, is pondering the triumph of Liberty in the cotton fields, the occasion seems appropriate for a few remarks from Father Coughlin on the subject of "social justice."

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Agriculture - 1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# ARKANSAS PLANTERS FIGHT UNION COLORED, WHITE SHARECROPPERS

## Group's Drive For Living Wage Meets Hostile Reprisals

Little Rock, Ark., Feb. 6—(ANP)—Organized 18 months ago to safeguard tenants' right under the now defunct AAA, the Southern Tenant Farmer's Union is causing grave concern to white planters throughout this state because for the first time they are seeing poor white and Negro sharecroppers united to improve their economic lot.

So serious is the concern of rich planters that evictions, beatings, summary trials and other repressive measures are used against this union. It has evoked an interest which previous governmental investigations of the sharecroppers' plight failed to arouse. Landowners, realizing its potential strength, envision it as an agency which may cause "uprisings" and "racial strife."

Organizers of the union have patiently fostered the doctrine that a common battle must be waged by white and Negro labor to improve the economic status of both and that both are in hte same financial boat. Members are told to forget their prejudice and work together in harmony. And for the first time this policy is being felt on a large scale in Dixie, although previously there have been isolated instances of unions of skilled trades in urban centers.

**Worked Harmoniously**

In three counties where the union is strongest with a membership of 6,000 divided almost equally betweena the races, both groups are wrokingtogether in extreme friendship in their common fight against whatthy considr unfair practices by landowners. This organization was allowed to get a foothold because planters took the position at first that it was one of those fly-by-night moves that wouldn't last. Now, however, they break up meetings and frankly declare they will not have union members on their plantations.

In order to combat the union, a blacklist has been prepared and issued secretly to planters. Union membership is sufficient ground for eviction and tenants evicted for that cause find it almost impossible to get placed at another.

**Demand Investigation**

A wholesale eviction which took place recently near Earle has caused union officials to appeal to Washington for a probe and Gov. Futrell has already sent state investigators to the scene. The trouble was caused by the wholesale eviction of almost 100 persons, half of them women and children, from the 540-acre farm of C. H. Dibble. The tenants were driven out by deputy sheriffs and left on a snowy road with their possessions piled beside them. The union got five tents, aided the women in getting to homes of friends in a nearby town and established an eviction camp still maintained by the men.

At a meeting near Earle held later, deputies drove both the Negro and white audience away and ran a Nashville socialist scheduled to speak there out of town. Two Negroes were shot and slightly wounded. Four others were sentenced by a justice of the peace to one year terms for rioting and another was held to the grand jury charged with assault with intent to kill.

**"Negro Like a Saddle Horse"**

When Dibble was questioned as to the eviction and his attitude toward the union, he gave an answer typical of the Dixie planter. "A Negro is just like a saddle horse," he said. "It's only good business to take care of him, but he's a dependent, and when he gets the idea that he's the equal of white people—well, that makes him dangerous. I've got nothing against the union unless it interferes with my business. And the union sure made the Negroes around my place worthless."

Evicted tenants declared they were ready to stand by the union until the end. Negroes make much of the fact that whites are working and sticking by them. In other places, secret meetings are held in lonely cabins. The organization is being prefected and is growing stronger week by week despite attempts to break it up which seem actually to foster its growth. It has set the entire South thinking about a problem existing here since the Civil War. This union of two races is considered everywhere as amounting to a social phenomenon south of the Mason and Dixon line.

# FUTRELL 'HANDS OFF' IN TENANT QUARREL

## Sees No Basis for Settlement of Unionization Controversy

## NO POWER TO INTERVENE

### Landowner Cannot Force Worker to Stay on Farm, Neither Can Tenant Stay Without Permission, He Says

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Feb. 28.—Governor Futrell today indicated he could see no basis for settlement of the long-standing controversy over the unionization movement among sharecroppers on Eastern Arkansas plantations.

Clearly indicating a "hands off" policy, the governor described the situation as one growing out of the desire of some tenants to join a white and negro union on one hand and the fear of plantation owners of "agitation" and race-friction on the other.

**Cannot Intervene**

He recently advised officials of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, who charged terroristic activity against evicted tenants, that he could not intervene except upon the request of the local authorities.

"A landowner cannot force a tenant to stay upon his farm, neither can a tenant stay upon the owner's farm without his permission. It still takes two to make a contract," Governor Futrell said in a statement today upon his return from a personal investigation in the area.

His trip included a visit to a tent colony in Cross County made up of more than 100 persons who claim to have been recently evicted from plantations for union activity.

Last week the union alleged that unexploded dynamite had been thrown into the colony at night. The sheriff denied this, describing the report as "publicity."

Futrell reported a "vivid remembrance" in the area of the "Elaine affair" of 1919 in which several persons were killed in a race riot. In this connection, he said of the present situation:

"Some of these negro tenant farmers wanted to join a union. They had the legal right to do so. The landowners conceded this, but they are afraid. They know the negro is easily excited into the most unbridled violence. This has happened in Eastern Arkansas.

**Remember the Elaine Affair**

"They remember vividly the Elaine affair, where the negroes under the guidance of white men had planned to dispatch several owners of land in that country. A fortunate circumstance prevented the killing of half a dozen landowners within the same few minutes.

"You cannot get this fear out of these landowners. They don't want trouble. They don't want agitators around."

"Speaking of Eastern Arkansas, I am reminded of the play, 'Much Ado About Nothing.' With slight modification, this fits the situation in Eastern Arkansas with reference to the Tenant Farmers' Union. It is much ado about a very little."

The governor said he had taken statements yesterday from negro tenants which said they received good treatment from the landlords but that landowners would "not let them stay if they were going to join the union."

"A landowner has a right to not keep any person on his farm," the governor said. "Reasons which are satisfactory to him are sufficient. The law cannot inquire into that."

# AGREEMENT NEAR IN ARKANSAS DISPUTE

## Sharecroppers To Go Back To Farms; 'Ringleaders' Leave

PARKIN, ARK., Feb. 29.—(AP)—A solution to the controversy centering about a group of negro sharecroppers housed in a tent near Parkin was reported near this afternoon.

Sherwood Eddy, author and Y. M. C. A. figure, and Dr. William R. Amberson, a professor of the University of Tennessee medical college at Memphis, conferred this afternoon with a number of planters on a plan to remove the tenant farmers from the colony to farms where they can go back to work.

Earlier in the day Mayor H. H. Melhorn revealed that three of four ringleaders" of the sharecropper colony had been warned to leave town after he said individual tenants had expressed a desire to accept contracts land owners had offered them but feared colony leaders "might throw them into the river."

"There won't be any trouble," Mayor Melhorn said. "The ring leaders promised to leave rather than face prosecution. The rest of the tenants seemed anxious to go to work when farms were offered them yesterday."

He termed as a "publicity stunt" a telegram H. L. Mitchell, Memphis secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, sent to Representative Caroline O'Day of New York, in which Mitchel said aid was needed to prevent "wholesale massacre of homeless men, women and children."

"There is no hint of trouble," the mayor said. "The colonists have flour, cows pigs and everything they need."

Earlier in the week, Gov. Futrell had described the situation as "much ado about very little."

Mayor Melhorn expressed belief that Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt had asked Gov. Futrell to make his personal investigation at Parkin, but the Governor said later in the day that he had not heard from Mrs. Roosevelt, and that the investigation "was made solely on my own initiative."

Mr Eddy and Dr. Amberson expressed a desire to get as many of the negro farmers back on plantations as soon as possible.

# Evictions In Arkansas Fail to Break Union

**By Rex Pitkin**

**(Special to the Daily Worker)**

EARLE, Ark., Feb. 28.—A sharecropper has starved to death.

A hungry family, finding a swollen pig which had been killed on the highway, dragged the animal home and devoured it.

Another family found a turtle which a fisherman had thrown on the banks of the St. Francis River. They ate it.

The clapboard shack of a Negro widow was burned to the ground.

A hundred-year-old Negro woman, born into slavery, was turned out of her home in a blizzard.

Two union members were shot in the back by deputy sheriffs as they left a union meeting.

Three Negroes were arrested because they dared to report a series of evictions to union headquarters.

**Hungar in Cotton Country**

Terror and hunger stalk through the cotton country in Arkansas.

Three sticks of dynamite, which fortunately failed to explode, were tossed among the tents of a hundred evicted sharecroppers at Parkin. A few hours previously notices scrawled in heavy pencil on boards nailed to the tents warned all the evicted croppers to leave the state.

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Daily Worker 3-2-36

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The season for plowing and the planting of crops is close at hand. But in spite of much suffering from the cold and lack of food, croppers refuse to scab, and many of the cotton fields remain idle. They will remain so, croppers say, until the evicted families are returned to their homes.

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Daily Worker 5-21-36

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# Evictions In Arkansas Fail to Break Union

By Rex Pitkin

(Special to the Daily Worker)

EARLE, Ark., Feb. 28.—A sharecropper has starved to death.

A hungry family, finding a swollen pig which had been killed on the highway, dragged the animal home and devoured it.

Another family found a turtle which a fisherman had thrown on the banks of the St. Francis River. They ate it.

The clapboard shack of a Negro widow was burned to the ground.

A hundred-year-old Negro woman, born into slavery, was turned out of her home in a blizzard.

Two union members were shot in the back by deputy sheriffs as they left a union meeting.

Three Negroes were arrested because they dared to report a series of evictions to union headquarters.

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Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas

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## POLICE ARREST FIVE FROM LABOR SOCIETY

### Booked for Vagrancy—Chief Says They Were Interfering

5-19-36

Charged with interfering with day laborers as they started across Harahan Bridge to work on eastern Arkansas farms, five members of the Workers Alliance of Memphis were arrested by police early yesterday morning on charges of vagrancy and disorderly conduct.

Later in the day, H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, filed suit in chancery court asking that Chief Will Lee be enjoined from arresting Workers Alliance members. Chancellor Bejach will hear the application for a temporary injunction at 10 o'clock this morning.

Mitchell said in his petition day laborers, who are members of the tenant farmers union, are on strike in eastern Arkansas for higher wages and the Memphis Workers Alliance members are supporting the strikers.

Arrested yesterday were W. G. Simpson, J. T. Jobe, Joe Smith, Jim Curtis and Frank Vaughn.

"Planters in Arkansas need day labor," Chief Lee said. "They send their trucks over here for workers and we are not going to let some men who won't work keep others from working. We have received many complaints of negroes seeking 'permits' to cross the bridge. We won't tolerate such tactics."

Circulars calling for a cotton-chopping strike were distributed yesterday in parts of St. Francis, Crittenden and Cross counties. The union is demanding a wage scale of $1.50 a day for choppers and $2.50 a day for tractor drivers.

Sheriff C. M. Stacy of Cross County said at Wynne that "plenty of labor is available to replace strikers."

## GENERAL STRIKE IS CALLED IN FIELDS

### Arkansas Cotton Choppers Urged To Quit In Move For Higher Wages

5-29-36

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 28.—(AP)—A "general strike" in the northeast Arkansas cotton fields to force plantation "cwners and bosses" to deal with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union was announced here today by union leaders.

"Stop all work—stop every hoe—stop every plow—strike on every plantation and farm!" said strike notices distributed in Crittenden, St. Francis and Cross Counties where already a strike among cotton choppers was ordered several days ago.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, said the sharecroppers, tenant farmers and day laborers generally were asked to join the strike along with cotton choppers who are asking $1.50 for a 10-hour day. The general strike, he said, was voted at a meeting here yesterday.

He claims 3,000 cotton choppers have walked out and that they will be joined by hundreds of sharecroppers and tenants.

Plantation owners and county officers took the strike notice calmly.

At Little Rock, Gov. J. M. Futrell announced he would pursue a "hands off" policy.

Arkansas labor department officials say that the choppers receive 75 cents a day, and in some cases, $1.

"Agitators are responsible for the trouble," said Gov. Futrell, adding that he had answered the protest of two New Yorkers with letters advising them that "our people in Arkansas are not mistreated half as much as yours are in New York."

The governor added that he had chopped cotton "many a day for 50 cents a day and my dinner, without complaining."

County officers denied charges that strikers have been "terrorized," and said the charges were made "to create outside interest," in a strike "in which only the organizers are interested."

## Cheap Agitation

Mr. Norman Thomas cheapened himself and his principles yesterday in a telegram to President Roosevelt at Little Rock. The telegram gave voice again to the vicious and untrue claims of reds, pinks, paid agents of unrest and irresponsible newspapers that a critical condition exists in Arkansas between farmers and farm workers.

It was an effort to embarrass Mr. Roosevelt as a guest of Arkansas, and whether or not Mr. Thomas believed the vicious and untrue propaganda he sent to the president the telegram was a despicable trick.

The only purpose it could serve would be to encourage insincere outlaw labor organizers to borrow the president's name, as they have done before, to undermine law, order and justice for the fees they collect from unsuspecting poor folks.

The truth is, and Mr. Thomas ought to know it, Arkansas needs no interference from Mr. Roosevelt or the national government in the settlement of a police problem. It is only a police problem which the agents of unrest and Mr. Thomas have provoked.

The larger economic problem is the whole south's inheritance. The plight of the sharecropper is not going to be solved by Mr. Thomas, nor by the hired Mitchells, nor by the pinkish newspapers to whom social justice is only claptrap for attention.

Mr. Roosevelt's administration, with the full support of southern lawmakers, has recognized and acted and will act again on behalf of cotton farmers and farm workers. The farm tenant bill of Senator Bankhead strikes directly at the heart of the problem and strikes soundly. As Senator Robinson so aptly recalls, Mr. Thomas and his cohorts opposed it, while the Arkansas senator fought for its adoption.

Whatever their reasoning in their opposition, their motive could only be to prevent a sensible approach to a solution. The paid agents of unrest want violence as against constructive action. They have no place in orderly progress. They want destruction.

The report of Samuel E. Whitaker, specail assistant to the attorney general of the

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The four men fined in city court were arrested while picketing the Harahan Bridge entrance in support of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union's strike call in Arkansas. They paid their fines under protest.

# POLICE ARREST FIVE FROM LABOR SOCIETY

## Booked for Vagrancy—Chief Says They Were Interfering

5-19-36

Charged with interfering with day laborers as they started across Harahan Bridge to work on eastern Arkansas farms, five members of the Workers Alliance of Memphis were arrested by police early yesterday morning on charges of vagrancy and disorderly conduct.

Later in the day, H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, filed suit in chancery court asking that Chief Will Lee be enjoined from arresting Workers Alliance members. Chancellor Bejach will hear the application for a temporary injunction at 10 o'clock this morning.

Mitchell said in his petition day laborers, who are members of the tenant farmers union, are on strike in eastern Arkansas for higher wages and the Memphis Workers Alliance members are supporting the strikers.

Arrested yesterday were W. G. Simpson, J. T. Jobe, Joe Smith, Jim Curtis and Frank Vaughn.

"Planters in Arkansas need day labor," Chief Lee said. "They send their trucks over here for workers and we are not going to let some men who won't work keep others from working. We have received many complaints of negroes seeking 'permits' to cross the bridge. We won't tolerate such tactics."

Circulars calling for a cotton-chopping strike were distributed yesterday in parts of St. Francis, Crittenden and Cross counties. The union is demanding a wage scale of $1.50 a day for choppers and $2.50 a day for tractor drivers.

Sheriff C. M. Stacy of Cross County said at Wynne that "plenty of labor is available to replace strikers."

# GENERAL STRIKE IS CALLED IN FIELDS

## Arkansas Cotton Choppers Urged To Quit In Move For Higher Wages

5-29-36

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 28.—(AP)—A "general strike" in the northeast Arkansas cotton fields to force plantation "owners and bosses" to deal with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union was announced here today by union leaders.

"Stop all work—stop every hoe—stop every plow—strike on every plantation and farm," said strike notices distributed in Crittenden, St. Francis and Cross Counties where already a strike among cotton choppers was ordered several days ago.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, said the sharecroppers, tenant farmers and day laborers generally were asked to join the strike along with cotton choppers who are asking $1.50 for a 10-hour day. The general strike, he said, was voted at a meeting here yesterday. He claims 3,000 cotton choppers have walked out and that they will be joined by hundreds of sharecroppers and tenants.

Plantation owners and county officers took the strike notice calmly.

At Little Rock, Gov. J. M. Futrell announced he would pursue a "hands off" policy.

Arkansas labor department officials say that the choppers receive 75 cents a day, and in some cases, $1.

"Agitators are responsible for the trouble," said Gov. Futrell, adding that he had answered the protest of two New Yorkers with letters advising them that "our people in Arkansas are not mistreated half as much as yours are in New York."

The governor added that he had chopped cotton "many a day for 50 cents a day and my dinner, without complaining."

County officers denied charges that strikers have been "terrorized," and said the charges were made "to create outside interest," in a strike "in which only the organizers are interested."

# Cheap Agitation

Mr. Norman Thomas cheapened himself and his principles yesterday in a telegram to President Roosevelt at Little Rock. The telegram gave voice again to the vicious and untrue claims of reds, pinks, paid agents of unrest and irresponsible newspapers that a critical condition exists in Arkansas between farmers and farm workers.

It was an effort to embarrass Mr. Roosevelt as a guest of Arkansas, and whether or not Mr. Thomas believed the vicious and untrue propaganda he sent to the president the telegram was a despicable trick.

The only purpose it could serve would be to encourage insincere outlaw labor organizers to borrow the president's name, as they have done before, to undermine law, order and justice for the fees they collect from unsuspecting poor folks.

The truth is, and Mr. Thomas ought to know it, Arkansas needs no interference from Mr. Roosevelt or the national government in the settlement of a police problem. It is only a police problem which the agents of unrest and Mr. Thomas have provoked.

The larger economic problem is the whole south's inheritance. The plight of the sharecropper is not going to be solved by Mr. Thomas, nor by the hired Mitchells, nor by the pinkish newspapers to whom social justice is only claptrap for attention.

Mr. Roosevelt's administration, with the full support of southern lawmakers, has recognized and acted and will act again on behalf of cotton farmers and farm workers. The farm tenant bill of Senator Bankhead strikes directly at the heart of the problem and strikes soundly. As Senator Robinson so aptly recalls, Mr. Thomas and his cohorts opposed it, while the Arkansas senator fought for its adoption.

Whatever their reasoning in their opposition, their motive could only be to prevent a sensible approach to a solution. The paid agents of unrest want violence as against constructive action. They have no place in orderly progress. They want destruction.

The report of Samuel E. Whitaker, special assistant to the attorney general of the

United States, is acceptable proof that the so-called strike of cotton choppers is a devil's myth, trumped up and harped upon by agitators and a reckless press.

There is much work to be done in Arkansas, in Mr. Thomas' own New York and in every other state in the nation before social justice flowers from phrase to fact.

And not in Arkansas, not in New York, not in any other state is social justice to be accomplished by lies, trickery, deception or violence for the profit of hireling agitators.

# Agitators Not Aiding Cotton Field Labor

In all ages and in all lands, civilization has had to suffer from the activities of false prophets. It was so in Biblical times. Unfortunately, great depressions and periods of unrest or change provide a fertile field for them; and when their activities are coupled with the modern factor we know as propaganda, the truth is generally lost sight of. The result is a confused and distressing condition which is destructive of understanding, good will and the mutual confidence which should exist among those most intimately concerned.

The so-called choppers' strike in the Eastern Arkansas cotton fields is a striking illustration. As The Commercial Appeal pointed out several days ago, there is no strike. Nor will there be any strike. A few agitators have undertaken to make some impossible demands and have attempted to harass the labor now employed or seeking to be employed in the fields. Spurred on by a few professional reformers, some misguided, others not, an agitation was worked up and an effort was made to have the situation take on nationwide importance.

Such pink-parlor paper revolutions merely muddy the waters. The southern plantation owner or farmer who employs labor in the fields has no desire to avoid the plain facts. He knows that conditions are not as desirable as they should be. He realizes that the system might be improved. But he also knows that it cannot be improved by agitators who are not familiar with the facts or who have no interest other than stirring up animosities. Therefore, the entire scheme of propaganda and agitation takes on the livery of disgust.

The difficulty is that those who are leading the so-called strikers on and who are in charge of the movement have not stopped to look into the facts. Several weeks ago the agitation was directed at the sharecropper. His plight was pictured as horrible by such worthies as Norman Thomas and Sherwood Eddy of New York, neither of whom knows anything about cotton or farming conditions. At that time the day laborer in the cotton fields was not considered. And yet, what are the facts?

An Arkansas plantation owner whose books are open to Mr. Thomas or Dr. Eddy, is authority for the statement that last year the average sharecropper on his place wound up the season with a net of $2.25 a day for every day he worked. This was the figure arrived at when the price he received for his crop was divided by the number of days he worked. Moreover, this plantation owner has notified all sharecroppers who want to walk out now that he will pay for the incomplete crop at the rate of $1.50 a day from the time it was pitched.

Now that the crop season is under way and summer has come the agitators have turned from the man who is busy about his work and are attempting to arouse the day laborer who is offered work during an emergency period.

This is one of the unfortunate phases of the situation. When every force in the country, both political and industrial, is straining every point to put people to work, the false prophets spend their time stirring up strife and, through a system of sabotage, do everything possible to clog the machinery. More unfortunate still is the fact that it all comes about through a form of exploitation. The leaders who neither toil nor spin find it necessary in order to make a showing to call and promote strikes, while newspapers magnify and color minor incidents.

The one and only approach to a solution of the tenant, or to be more specific, the cotton field problem, is through mutual understanding. That comes not through propaganda and agitation, but through the ability of both employer and employe to see eye to eye the common problem. The government has pointed the way in its land settlement and home-owning programs. It has made it possible for any man to own a farm, and today there are literally thousands of acres of land awaiting a buyer.

What we need is fewer agitators and more initiative among the individual workers, less agitation and more earnest, active application of plain, common sense.

# *No Peonage*

NO LAW of our country makes the share-cropper a slave. But, as we have learned in the past year, law, when it meets hard domestic fact, can turn its face the other way. As the strike of the Arkansas share-croppers continues with desperate steadfastness day after day and slowly gains more notice in the press, we are becoming aware that in a section of our country slave labor still prevails. To get any work at all, the share-croppers have been forced to accept yellow-dog contracts at wages of 75 cents for a ten-hour day, and even this they owe in advance for rent, food, and clothing; so that many of them never handle a coin from one end of the year to the other. Starved into the last ditch, the cotton workers could retreat no farther. They began to climb out. They organized. Negroes and whites together forgot the urge to hate in the urge to live and joined to form the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. The planters tried to shatter it by instituting a system of terror by eviction. In answer the union called the present strike, in which six thousand workers are demanding a wage increase to $1.50 a day.

Planters, police, sheriffs, and judges are concentrating their efforts on breaking the strike. State rangers are driving the workers back to the cotton fields at the point of a gun. The National Guard has dragged machine-guns into the village streets, and although there has been no shooting, has forced picket lines to disband by intimidation. Harassed by threats to "leave or be lynched," many of the workers have crossed the state line to seek refuge in Tennessee. But the terror they fled from was there to meet them. In Memphis last week a judge sentenced five cotton choppers from Arkansas, arrested in a police raid, to a fine of $50 each in order "to set an example of the men and prevent agitation." At the same time a picket line of refugees was charged by the police and one of the pickets killed. Meanwhile in Arkansas the cooperation of law and private property has forged a savagely effective weapon against the strikers. The law brings about the arrest of the strikers on charges of vagrancy, sentences them to fines instead of imprisonment, and then makes them work out the fines by picking cotton on the private plantations. In one town a man named Beachers ordered the arrests in his official capacity as chief of police, and then in his private capacity as plantation owner contracted with himself to put the prisoners to work in his own fields. In this situation the special assistant district attorney sent down by the Department of Justice to investigate violations of the federal peonage, or "forced-labor," law was helpless. For while the state of Arkansas has abolished private contracting for prison labor, several counties allow it. Thus, when Governor Futrell of Arkansas promised Whitaker, the Department of Justice man, to remedy whatever illegal conditions the investigation should disclose, he knew he was quite safe since Whitaker would have to report, as he did, a finding of "no peonage."

What makes the situation so grim a deadlock is the fact that the planters are in their way as desperate as the laborers. It is true that in cotton the margin of profits is so thin that higher wages might narrow it down to nothing. Cotton is the sick man of the South. It may have been king once, but like all kings who feel their power slipping it has become a tyrant, and this accounts for the brutality which has marked the planters' efforts to break the strike. Even in the unlikely event that the share-croppers should win their extra 75 cents a day, that would be but a temporary solution. The roots of the problem go deeper than the question of wages and hours; they reach down to the fundamental cause—the bankruptcy of Southern agriculture. Unless a program of diversification of crops and the breaking up of large-scale, single-crop holdings into individual farms is adopted—and the federal government allowed to put it into practice—no stop-gap remedy will save the share-croppers.

Arkansas.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

# FUTRELL URGES PROBE OF TENANCY PROBLEMS

Commercial Appeal

## Legislative Investigation May Follow Conference

11-24-36

## FUTRELL WANTS "TRUTH"

Memphis

### Committee Members Split on Lawless, Intimidation Report —"Homestead" Solution Presented to "Arrest Growth"

BY BILLY SISSON
Staff Correspondent

HOT SPRINGS, Nov. 23. — A move to have the Legislature investigate the entire farm tenant situation in Arkansas at public hearings, featured a conference of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission here this afternoon.

Meeting to draft recommendations for a nation-wide conference on tenancy here in December, the commissioner saw Governor Futrell to take the floor to say he thought an investigation was in order.

"The truth ought to be disclosed," he stated. "There should be an investigation to inquire into the rights of the tenants, and to see what rights have been denied them. It is due the folks who treated their tenants properly that the facts be brought out."

**Report Submitted**

The meeting had smooth sailing, dealing with health and educational programs for the tenants, until Dr. A. C. Millar, editor of the Methodist Record, gave the majority report of the committee on lawlessness and intimidation.

The proposal asked that citizens have the right to assemble peaceably and "if the reports of lawlessness in East Arkansas are true," that the next governor be called upon to announce that he would use his office to correct and keep down this situation.

The resolution also asked that the next Legislature appoint committee to investigate communities where lawless acts were alleged to have occurred.

R. T. Coleman, Little Rock lawyer and operator of a large farm near Osceola, chairman of the committee, read a minority report. He said he was not willing to admit that such instances as the whipping of "the woman" grew out of tenancy. He referred to an alleged whipping given Willie Sue Blagden of Memphis in East Arkansas.

**Matter Is Returned**

"We recommend that a commission be created by the Legislature to investigate the status of tenancy in the state, and report the exact facts and circumstances relating to it, as a basis for determining the needs of tenancy and of working out a proper solution of its problems; such investigation to be conducted by public headings at which all interested persons may appear and be heard."

It finally was voted to recommit the matter to the committee for redrafting and submission tomorrow. The consensus was that the new resolution would be substantially the substitute motion.

During the debate Dr. Millar charged that the present commission would never have been appointed if it had not been for the "national scandal over what happened in East Arkansas." He said practically all religious papers had taken the matter up and that it "could not be dodged."

J. R. Butler, Memphis, president of the Southern Tenant Union, said some people "close their eyes to what is what," and that if the commission is interested in finding out whether the things that have been said are slanderous "it could be easily determined."

Dr. J. B. Watson, negro president Arkansas A. and M. College at Pine Bluff, charged that Arkansas was the least offender in the matter of any southern state where there is a delta.

"There is not another southern state where a union could have been organized," he said.

**Planter Makes Denial**

J. O. E. Beck, Hughes planter, said that "organizers running around at midnight," had charged that he was working his men under guns and "feeding them only greens and cornbread." He denied this emphatically and also the charge that he paid his tenants with metal checks. He said he gave them money they could spend wherever they pleased.

W. G. Padgett, Marion sharecropper, berated the union as "no good can come out of it." Padgett charged he was not a landowner because of a "terrible land racket operated out of Memphis," where land was rented and re-rented four or five times before the sharecropper got it.

Governor-elect Carl Bailey had been expected to attend the session, but had a tooth removed this afternoon.

C. E. Palmer, Hot Springs, chairman, said any investigation by the Legislature would not affect the present commission.

Two attorneys at the session presented divergent remedies for meeting the tenancy problem.

Mr. Coleman, a lawyer and plantation owner, told the commission that "complete abolition of tenancy is impossible," and urged a program aimed at "improvement of the moral, physical, social and financial condition of tenants and a broadening of his opportunity to acquire ownership of land."

**Homestead Plan Given**

C. T. Carpenter, Marked Tree, chairman of the commission's subcommittee on legislation, stating tenancy to be "a national disgrace," proposed "a homestead plan" which he said "will immediately arrest the growth of tenancy and in time entirely remove the evils of tenancy by enabling those who cultivate the soil to own their own homes."

Carpenter urged joint action by the federal and state governments to aid tenants in purchasing their own homesteads and to establish communities of such homesteads—owners who would employ co-operative methods.

Coleman said he favored "a continuation of the tenancy system on an improved economic basis." As an immediate step, he recommended that "the exact crisis of the tenancy problem and facts pertaining thereto be developed at an impartial public hearing."

He proposed that the government move to improve the status of tenants through direct loans to landlords.

He stressed the need for government aid in improving health, education and housing facilities.

**Program Outlined**

Carpenter outlined a six-point program:

1. Direct federal supervision of the homestead policy.
2. Sale by the government in co-operation with the states of farm lands to tenants on long range, low interest terms.
3. Community ownership and use of machinery too expensive for the individual farmer to buy.
4. Co-operative crop production and marketing with certain crops to be grown on a large scale.
5. Homesteads large enough to provide a comfortable living, and restriction of homestead sales to persons who do not own homes.
6. Homestead payments to be spread over a period of not less than 33 years with interest rates not to exceed 3.24 per cent.

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Nation 12-5-36

PEONAGE IN ARKANSAS RECEIVED A SEVERE legal blow on November 25 when Paul D. Peacher, town marshal of Earle, Arkansas, was sentenced in a federal court to two years in prison and a fine of $3,500 for violating the anti-slavery statute. Peacher was accused and convicted of falsely arresting a group of Negroes on charges of vagrancy, merely because they were "loafing" on the street at the time, and forcing them to work out their sentences on his farm. Peacher's attorney, Mr. Lamb, said in summing up that the charges against his client were the result of politics. "There had to be an investigation," he said, "with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union sending messages to the President and to Governor Futrell and the election coming on." Mr. Lamb also said, complainingly, that he had thought "when the election was over, this lawsuit would be allowed to die out." The S. T. F. U. will no doubt gladly acknowledge its part in the affair, but there are at least two indications that the investigation *was* an election demonstration. Mr. Peacher was spared the prison sentence and released on bond; the commission appointed by Governor Futrell in the heat of the campaign, when he promised an investigation of farm tenancy right after the election, announced a date for its first session and then canceled the meeting. Attorney General Cummings made sure that the Peacher trial was competently and fairly handled by sending a special representative to the scene. This blow at backwoods dictatorship is to be followed by further attempts to enforce the Bill of Rights by the Workers' Defense League, if it can raise the necessary funds.

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## A Slave-Holder Convicted

Post 12-1-36

A Federal court jury has convicted Paul D. Peacher, town marshal of Earle, Ark., on a charge of holding in slavery eight Negroes whom he had arrested and compelled to work on his farm.

Judge John E. Martineau, sentencing Peacher to pay a $3500 fine or serve two years in prison, told the jury the evidence was clear that the marshal had arrested the Negroes without cause during a cotton-choppers' strike last May, and had influenced a mayor's court to find them guilty of vagrancy on false evidence. "This," said the judge, "is not a lone case in Arkansas. It occurs frequently and it ought to be stopped."

Correct. And thanks to this Arkansas jury, to this Federal judge and to the United States Department of Justice, which took a direct and active interest in prosecuting the case, there is increased prospect that this despicable form of modern slavery may be stopped. The Peacher conviction gives new vitality to the Federal anti-slavery statute, passed in 1866 but never before invoked in Arkansas and seldom in other states.

By its vigorous prosecution of the slaveholding marshal the Government has shown that its interest in the humble sharecroppers did not end when other members of their race had cast their votes for the President. Now there is hope that the Government will display similar interest in similar charges from other Southern states. The report to the American Federation of Labor convention at Tampa that Negro turpentine workers in a Florida settlement are being held in virtual peonage, guarded against escape, would appear to deserve prompt investigation.

# Letters To The Editor

**FROM A GREEN SHIRT**

To The Commercial Appeal:

I see that the federal court has convicted Paul D. Peacher, marshal of Earle, Ark., for holding seven negro union members in slavery on false charges of vagrancy. It has been a practice in northwest Arkansas by deputy sheriffs and city marshals to trump up charges of vagrancy against poor people who cannot defend themselves, and fine them, regardless of whether they are guilty or not. If the defendant cannot pay, he is worked on county farms or streets. This practice should be dealt with by the federal courts.

A common practice being used in most all of our J. P. courts is to convict all cases brought into the court by certain deputy sheriffs, regardless of guilty or not, so they can collect their fees. This scheme was used on me not so long ago, but didn't work, as I happened to know law and employed an attorney. I was informed by the arresting officers that I would be convicted regardless, and that the best thing was to plead guilty and pay a fine of about $50.

It is a common practice of our sheriffs to give every riding boss on big plantations a commission so he can carry a gun. This practice should be remanded by the voters when a sheriff is found to practice such violations. It is the duty of every good citizen to see that every such case is investigated by the proper authorities. Perhaps a few more convictions will do a lot of good for the good old south.

It looks like the sharecropper and tenant farmers of the south will wake up and fight for their rights as American citizens. So let's all thank Uncle Sam for dealing justice where justice is needed.

J. A. GREEN.

President of the Tenant Farmers and Laborers Union, the Green Shirt Union, Cherry Valley, Ark.

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## SHARECROPPERS O. K. ARKANSAS GOVERNOR

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Dec. 10 (ANP).—Satisfaction with Governor-Elect Carl E. Bailey's attitude toward the "fundamental rights" of tenant farmers to organize was expressed by representatives of the Southern Tenants Farmers Union, who Tuesday called on Bailey and held an hour's conference.

Those who took part included Gardner Jackson, chairman of the National Committee on Social Rural Planning at Washington, representative of the union; H. L. Mitchell, Memphis, executive secretary; Newell Fowler, Memphis, union attorney, and Howard Kester, organizer and member of the executive committee.

The union was particularly desirous of learning Bailey's attitude because of last spring's cotton chopper's strike and charges of violence and terrorism against union members carried out by local and state officials, and the recent conviction of City Marshal Peacher of Earl on slavery charges.

# Arkansas Editor Chagrined

From Arkansas Gazette, (Little Rock)

Paul D. Peacher, charged with violating an ancient federal statute for the prevention of slavery, has been convicted. And Arkansas law, Arkansas justice, have been convicted with him in the courts of the United States.

The defendant in this case was, and still is, an Arkansas peace officer. The offense of which he has been convicted was not mere breaking of an ordinary law. It was as grave an offense as could be committed in America against fundamental human rights. What would have happened if the federal government had not gone in? Can anyone believe, after reading the testimony at the trial, that anything would have been done by anybody in Earle, or in Crittenden County, or in the judicial circuit which includes Crittenden county? The only redeeming feature of the whole deplorable business, so far as the state is concerned, is that Governor Futrell, after federal agents had made their investigation, pardoned the seven Negroes, whose labor, after they had been fined and confined in a stockade, was being used to clear a tract of land.

And even after Peacher had been indicted and brought to trial what would have happened if Federal Judge Martineau had not in effect told a hesitant jury that on the evidence as presented by both sides it virtually had no choice but to convict, and added:

> "This is not a matter that concerns these Negroes alone. It is a matter that concerns one of the most vital principles of our government, that is that we have abolished slavery forever, that we are not going to permit it to exist in any form or under any guise or under any kind of law."

Arkansas has not only suffered for generation after generation from unfavorable publicity of various sorts, but in more recent years has suffered particularly and specially from publicity growing out of conditions in Eastern Arkansas, which have been exaggerated and distorted by radical agitators. Now, on top of all that has gone before, comes the only "slavery" trial the nation has seen within living memory.

The revelations of this trial, judged as they will inevitably be judged by outsiders, will cast nationwide reproach on Arkansas. Our machinery of justice, which should above all safeguard and protect every man, white or black, in his essential human rights, failed to prevent the virtual enslavement of poor, ignorant and helpless Negroes.

But one great good should come out of this humiliating experience. For the future everybody has been warned that when the occasion demands the unsparing hand of the federal government will strike even though the state be inert or impotent.

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# Slavery in Arkansas

Daily Worker

"I'LL BUILD a dam across the lake with the bodies of dead union men."—A. L. Lancaster, Planter. 5-25-36

"We'll run Arkansas, you keep in your own state if you know what's good for you!"—City Marshal of Earle, talking to Sherwood Eddy. New York, N.Y.

**"We'll hang his hide to a cypress tree and stop all that labor trouble."**—Planters' vigilantes public statement about union leader in Earle.

**"Our histories should be revised in misleading us that slavery was ever abolished in Arkansas!"**—Eddy, wiring to U. S. Attorney General Homer Cummings.

**The plantation laborers struck for ten hours a day and $1.50 wage. They had been getting 75 cents for work lasting all daylight hours.**

The quotations above indicate the reaction of the plantation-owning ruling class of the State of Arkansas. Add the fact that strikers are arrested as rapidly as possible and charged with "vagrancy" and herded back to work at the point of the rifle.

In the face of such terror, the strikers persevere manfully. They made a modest request to the U. S. Attorney General, that he investigate the actual peonage, and the U. S. Department of Justice appointed a big southern plantation owner to investigate!

Shall these brave Negro and white strikers, struggling against a form of actual slavery, fighting for the barest minimum of living standards, be allowed to fight alone? Shall this cynical jest of Attorney General Cummings be allowed to go unchallenged?

Northern labor cannot let these questions go unanswered.

# End Terror In Arkansas, ILD Demand

Daily Worker 5-26-36

Protest against the terror against tenant farmers and sharecroppers in Arkansas, and against the arrest of Aron Gilmartin, secretary of the Socialist and Labor Defense Committee, there, was made yesterday by the International Labor Defense to Governor J. Marion Futrell of Arkansas. New York, N.Y.

Gilmartin, who was in Arkansas making an investigation of the terror against the tenant farmers there, was arrested in Crittenden County, Saturday, and is held in jail on a charge of "interfering with labor."

The I. L. D. wire, signed by Anna Damon, Acting National Secretary, demanded his release, as well as the release of all other arrested tenant-farmers, abolition of the concentration camps established for strikers, and restoration of constitutional rights to the tenant farmers and farm workers.

CHARLOTTE, N. C.
NEWS

MAY 21 1936

## *How to Beget Radicalism.*

At Earle, Arkansas, yesterday, 35 Negro farm hands were arrested when they left their field jobs in response to a strike call of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. According to the newspaper account of the incident, these men had made no show of violence or even of disorderliness. They had just laid down their hoes and quit — and for that they were arrested on a charge of vagrancy.

No wonder radical unions flourish in Arkansas. This is treatment which would encourage radicalism. For the police authority to attempt to suppress strikes is as bad as for the strikers to use force in trying to make a strike effective. Neither ought to be allowed, but if one is worse than the other, it is the misuse of the police authority. When rambunctious strikers misbehave, it is on their own responsibility, but when the police exceed themselves it is in the name of their employers, the public.

# PEONAGE CHARGE IS MADE BY EDDY

## Author and Lecturer Says 'There Is Slavery in Arkansas' on Cotton Farms

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 21. (AP).—Dr. Sherwood Eddy, author and lecturer, declared here tonight that "History is not up to date without "History is not up to date without saying there is slavery in Arkansas," after he returned from an investigation of a cotton choppers' strike in three east Arkansas counties.

Dr. Eddy, challenging claims of planters and Arkansas officers that few men have quit the fields and that the strike is not effective, said he found a "general strike" in progress with members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union "terrorized by guns, clubs and other weapons."

"The peonage act is being flagrantly violated," Dr. Eddy said before boarding a train en route to New York. "The federal government should be concerned with conditions in the cotton fields."

Dr. Eddy said that while interviewing the widow of a Negro sharecropper "who was shot to death two months ago and whose death was never investigated," that he was ordered from the plantation by the landlord who told him he "wouldn't mind shooting." He said, however, the planter was unarmed.

Near the town of Earle, Ark., in Crittenden county, Dr. Eddy said he found a stockade, completed either yesterday or today, in which 13 Negroes were held.

### Planters Minimize Strike

R. W. Minnie, operator of three plantations in the vicinity of Parkin, Ark., said the strike "hasn't gained a foothold" there.

"Most planters take care of their labor during seasons when there is no work for them to do. Many of them could be displaced. When the mechanical cotton pickers are finally perfected, at least forty per cent of the present labor could be displaced. Farmers are not anxious to discharge their labor."

Sheriff Howard Curlin of Marion said strike organizers are attempting to force labor from the farms through threats.

Ray Hargett, commissary manager for plantations at Levesque said "a few Negroes" failed to report for work Monday "because they were afraid," but that they are back at work.

The strike leaders are demanding $1.50 for a ten-hour day. Workers heretofore received $1 a day.

# Planters Scoff At Strike In Fields

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5-27-36

The report by Deputy Commissioner Harry C. Malcom upon his return from a two-day survey in the area last week said the "prevailing wage throughout eastern Arkansas, with very few exceptions, is 75 cents per day without regard to the number of hours worked."

A majority of the planters and officials of eastern Arkansas advised Malcom that there was "no strike" or that "the strike is not effective." he said.

# Evict Million Sharecroppers In Arkansas

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The original report showed that nearly 1,000,000 tenants and share-croppers were dispossessed.

Publication of suppressed sections of the report comes on the eve of a strike by tenants and sharecroppers in three Arkansas counties. It was in these three counties, Cross, Crittenden and St. Francis, that numerous evictions recently occured, largely, it is said, as a result of the formation of the share-croppers' Union, which includes both white and Negro members.

### Appeals Reported Unheeded.

According to Gardner Jackson, chairman of the committee on rural social planning, which has helped in the formation of the union, New Deal agencies in Washington have repeatedly promised relief to the evicted families, but representatives of the agencies in the field have refused assistance to these dispossessed tenants and "croppers" despite "orders" from Washington, Jackson recently sent out an appeal for funds for these families, declaring that if private aid was not immediately forthcoming many would starve.

In the three counties in Arkansas, according to Jackson, "choppers," who do the work of weeding, are paid slightly less than 75 cents for a 10-hour day. They are striking for $1.50 a day. Tractor drivers are paid slightly less than $1 for a 10-hour day and they are striking for $2.50.

A vote taken by the union showed an overwhelming majority in favor of a strike. Despite repeated violence and threats of violence the union has made remarkable headway, according to Jackson.

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

## Slavery in Arkansas

Daily Worker
New York, N.Y.
5-28-36

"I'LL BUILD a dam across the lake with the bodies of dead union men."—A. L. Lancaster, Planter.

"We'll run Arkansas, you keep in your own state if you know what's good for you!"—City Marshal of Earle, talking to Sherwood Eddy.

"We'll hang his hide to a cypress tree and stop all that labor trouble."—Planters' vigilantes public statement about union leader in Earle.

"Our histories should be revised in misleading us that slavery was ever abolished in Arkansas!"—Eddy, wiring to U. S. Attorney General Homer Cummings.

The plantation laborers struck for ten hours a day and $1.50 wage. They had been getting 75 cents for work lasting all daylight hours.

The quotations above indicate the reaction of the plantation-owning ruling class of the State of Arkansas. Add the fact that strikers are arrested as rapidly as possible and charged with "vagrancy" and herded back to work at the point of the rifle.

In the face of such terror, the strikers persevere manfully. They made a modest request to the U. S. Attorney General, that he investigate the actual peonage, and the U. S. Department of Justice appointed a big southern plantation owner to investigate!

Shall these brave Negro and white strikers, struggling against a form of actual slavery, fighting for the barest minimum of living standards, be allowed to fight alone? Shall this cynical jest of Attorney General Cummings be allowed to go unchallenged?

Northern labor cannot let these questions go unanswered.

## End Terror In Arkansas, ILD Demand

Daily Worker
5-26-36

Protest against the terror against tenant farmers and sharecroppers in Arkansas, and against the arrest of Aron Gilmartin, secretary of the Socialist and Labor Defense Committee, there, was made yesterday by the International Labor Defense to Governor J. Marion Futrell of Arkansas.

New York, N.Y.

Gilmartin, who was in Arkansas making an investigation of the terror against the tenant farmers there, was arrested in Crittenden County, Saturday, and is held in jail on a charge of "interfering with labor."

The I. L. D. wire, signed by Anna Damon, Acting National Secretary, demanded his release, as well as the release of all other arrested tenant-farmers, abolition of the concentration camps established for strikers, and restoration of constitutional rights to the tenant farmers and farm workers.

CHARLOTTE, N. C.
NEWS

MAY 21 1936

### How to Beget Radicalism.

At Earle, Arkansas, yesterday, 35 Negro farm hands were arrested when they left their field jobs in response to a strike call of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. According to the newspaper account of the incident, these men had made no show of violence or even of disorderliness. They had just laid down their hoes and quit — and for that they were arrested on a charge of vagrancy.

No wonder radical unions flourish in Arkansas. This is treatment which would encourage radicalism. For the police authority to attempt to suppress strikes is as bad as for the strikers to use force in trying to make a strike effective. Neither ought to be allowed, but if one is worse than the other, it is the misuse of the police authority. When rambunctious strikers misbehave, it is on their own responsibility, but when the police exceed themselves it is in the name of their employers, the public.

## PEONAGE CHARGE IS MADE BY EDDY

### Author and Lecturer Says 'There Is Slavery in Arkansas' on Cotton Farms

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 21. (AP).—Dr. Sherwood Eddy, author and lecturer, declared here tonight that "History is not up to date without saying there is slavery in Arkansas," after he returned from an investigation of a cotton choppers' strike in three east Arkansas counties.

Dr. Eddy, challenging claims of planters and Arkansas officers that few men have quit the fields and that the strike is not effective, said he found a "general strike" in progress with members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union "terrorized by guns, clubs and other weapons."

"The peonage act is being flagrantly violated," Dr. Eddy said before boarding a train en route to New York. "The federal government should be concerned with conditions in the cotton fields."

Dr. Eddy said that while interviewing the widow of a Negro sharecropper "who was shot to death two months ago and whose death was never investigated," that he was ordered from the plantation by the landlord who told him he "wouldn't mind shooting." He said, however, the planter was unarmed.

Near the town of Earle, Ark., in Crittenden county, Dr. Eddy said he found a stockade, completed either yesterday or today, in which 13 Negroes were held.

**Planters Minimize Strike**

R. W. Minnie, operator of three plantations in the vicinity of Parkin, Ark., said the strike "hasn't gained a foothold" there.

"Most planters take care of their labor during seasons when there is no work for them to do. Many of them could be displaced when the mechanical cotton pickers are finally perfected, at least forty per cent of the present labor could be displaced. Farmers are not anxious to discharge their labor."

Sheriff Howard Curlin of Marion said strike organizers are attempting to force labor from the farms through threats.

Ray Hargett, commissary manager for plantations at Levesque said "a few Negroes" failed to report for work Monday "because they were afraid," but that they are back at work.

The strike leaders are demanding $1.50 for a ten-hour day. Workers heretofore received $1 a day.

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The American Civil Liberties Union posted a $1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and final conviction of any person or persons guilty of violence against any member of the Union in connection with the farm strike.

Gov. J. M. Futrell commended the "spirit which prompted" the offer of the reward and told the Civil Liberties Union that the "greater part" of what it had heard about the cotton choppers' strike was "untrue."

Clay East, Memphis, Union organizer, and M. V. Moody, Little Rock attorney, published statements in Memphis describing what they termed mistreatment in Forrest City yesterday after D. M. Benson, another union organizer, was fined more than $1,000 for his activities in that section.

Special Asst. U. S. Atty. Gen. Sam E. Whitaker, accompanied by a State ranger began his investigation of charges of "peonage" among the cotton farm workers. Whitaker's movements were kept secret.

In notifying Gov. Futrell of the $1,000 reward, the Civil Liberties Union wrote him that it was being offered "because of reports of violence against three strikers, denying them the rights under the law to organize, strike and picket peacefully."

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Replying, Gov. Futrell said "no objection has been interposed to the formation of unions and the people to persuade laborers to quit work" but that people "have threatened workers if they didn't quit."

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Mr. Whitaker conferred with Commissioner Davis and Chief Lee.

He asked the location of the office of H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

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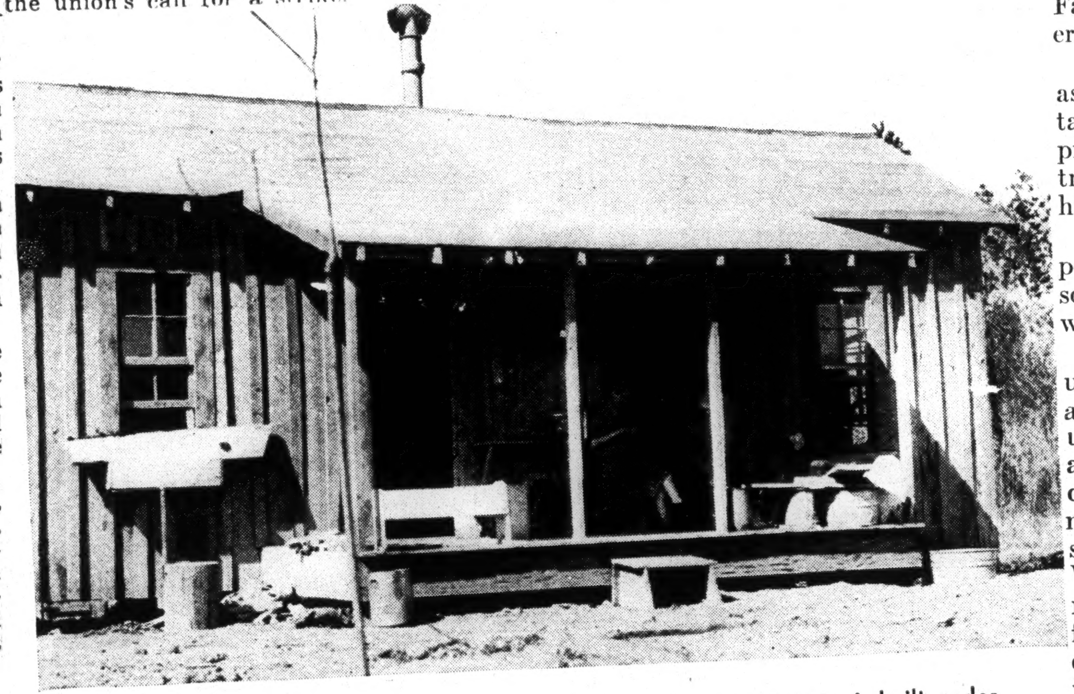

Acme

One of the houses on Delta Cooperative Farm No. 1, in Mississippi, built under the direction of Sherwood Eddy to relieve the plight of starving sharecroppers

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Suddenly they straightened, listening a little fearfully as they heard an automobile drive up outside. An armed guard swung back the gate of the "concentration-camp" and hustled the striking share-croppers into a line. Terror was in their eyes.

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**Investigators Balked**—Eddy and his companions drove back to Earl, center of the tenant farmers' strike in what he calls "lawless Arkansas." They found P. D Peacher, owner of the plantation on which the rough prison is built (and deputy sheriff and marshal as well). But he refused to give any information or let Eddy see any records of the men.

"We'll run Arkansas; you'll keep in your own State if you know what's good for you," Peacher threatened.

Later, Eddy reported, he tried to see the widow of a Negro who had been shot in the back by two masked men for testifying in defense of an arrested neighbor, but another planter drove him off the place.

Despite threats of violence and the arrest of one of the party for "disturbing labor," Eddy dug up more information on what he called "peonage" and "the almost complete denial of civil liberties and constitutional rights." He accused Peacher of being a "killer," and he charged that laborers have been kidnaped in Tennessee, carried into Arkansas, and forced to work on cotton plantations. "I have the names of planters who seized men and put them to work with guns," he said.

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National Guardsmen were called out as the strike spread, but were recalled after a short time, leaving State Rangers in charge of the four counties affected.

**Self-Help Project**—On the same trip south that took him to the strike area, Eddy visited the Delta Cooperative Farm at Hillhouse, Mississippi, founded on borrowed money and contributions to relieve the plight of the starving day-laborers on cotton farms.

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**Movement Spreads**—The spreading of the cooperative farm idea throughout impoverished areas of the South is seen in the utilization of the mechanical cotton picker as a labor-saving device. John D. and Mack D. Rust, inventors of this machine, were at first fearful that day-laborers and share-croppers would get only increased unemployment and starvation from their device; now they have dedicated the profits of the invention to extending the cooperative principle and making the saving in work react to the benefit of the workers. More farms will be bought if the first is successful.

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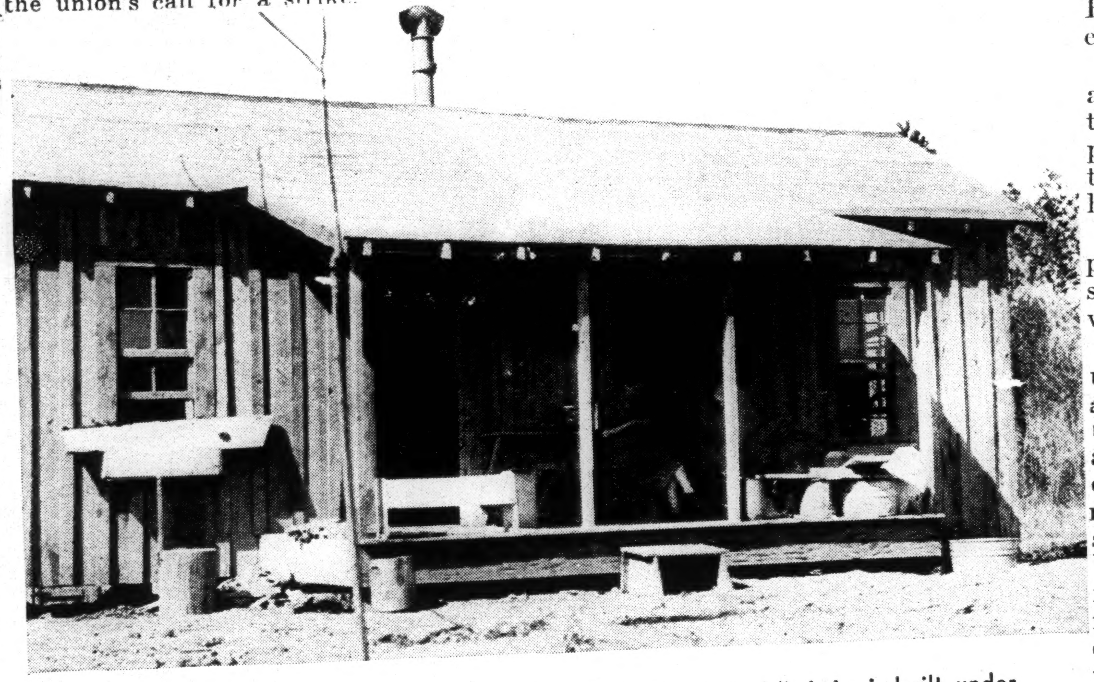

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Agriculture—1936 Labor Condition— Arkansas.

~~Ku Klux Klan—1936~~

7-27-36

Norfolk, Va. Pilot
June 18, 1936

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Their offense is in espousing the cause of tenant farmers, mostly Negroes, in a struggle that has already aroused the bitterness and resentment which are familiar in the South. But it is not often that this bitterness, well known as it is, expresses itself in such sadistic criminality against persons of this type. The questioning to which both were subjected (much of it unprintable) is alone a striking commentary on the state of mind into which men can work themselves. Their physical punishment was even worse. It was so much worse, in fact, that the possibility now arises that indifferent officials will be forced to action. A flogged Negro farmer, or even a dead one, may not stir the law to action. But it is going to be difficult for Arkansas officialdom, from Governor down, to ignore the mobbing and beating of a minister and a woman.

NORFOLK, VA.
VIRGINIAN PILOT

JUN 18 1936

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# U. S. WILL TAKE HAND IN TENANT FLOGGING CASE

Post

### Attorney-General To Send Investigators Into Arkansas Zone

6-19-36

By Scripps-Howard Alliance.

WASHINGTON, June 19.—Representatives of the United Attorney General's office will go to Memphis shortly to interview Miss Willie Sue Blagden regarding the Arkansas flogging, it was assured today.

Sam E. Whitaker, Special Assistant Attorney General who investigated peonage charges among Arkansas share-croppers, will return to that state to investigate the flogging.

Meanwhile, Atty.-Gen. Homer S. Cummings said that Mr. Whitaker's report on peonage will be withheld from the public.

"We want the flogging case investigated first so that we can present the entire picture of conditions in the area," Mr. Cummings declared.

**Harness Strap Used**

His office stated that Mr. Whitaker was out of the city but they expected to reach him today and see that he goes to Earle, Ark., as quickly as possible to gather information regarding the flogging.

Rev. Claude C. Williams of Little Rock is expected to be questioned by Mr. Whitaker. Both Miss Blagden and Rev. Williams allege that they were beaten with a harness strap and driven out of Earle when they went there seeking to get first hand information regarding the share-croppers strike being staged by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

They intended particularly to inquire into the disappearance of Frank Weems, 40-year-old Negro union member.

Both Rev. Williams and Miss Blagden are natives of Tennessee.

**Will Take His Time**

Possibility of prosecution of the floggers under the Lindbergh Law was declared impossible, despite the fact that they found Miss Blagden aboard the train for Tennessee.

It was pointed out that under the Lindbergh Law the victim must not only have been transported from one state to another but kidnaped and held for ransom.

Mr. Cummings entered the case on orders of President Roosevelt, who had been appealed to by Norman Thomas, Socialist presidential nominee.

At his press conference Mr. Cummings stated that flogging within a state is not indictable under any Federal law. He indicated that his department will take its time about conducting the investigation and making its reports public.

# CLAIMS OF BEATINGS TO BE INVESTIGATED

Commercial Appeal

### Federal Man to Probe Charges of Woman and Minister

6-20-36

Sam E. Whitaker of Chattanooga, Department of Justice investigator who recently completed an inquiry into farm tenant difficulties in Arkansas, was in Memphis again yesterday en route to Earle, Ark., to investigate claims of a Memphis woman and a Little Rock minister that they were beaten near Earle.

Mr. Whitaker said his investigation would be to determine whether any federal law was violated. He was sent south by Attorney General Cummings after complaints by Willie Sue Blagden of Memphis and the Rev. Claude C. Williams of Little Rock that they were beaten with a harness strap by six men at Earle Monday.

Following Whitaker's first investigation Governor Futrell said Whitaker had advised him that no violation of federal law had been found.

# WOMAN AND MINISTER BEATEN, SHE CHARGES

Commercial Appeal

### Avers That Attack Occurred Near Earle, Ark.

6-19-36

### TWO ARE BEING TREATED

### Pair Say That They Had Gone to Arkansas City for Funeral of Negro Allegedly Slain in Labor Dispute

Willie Sue Blagden, 28, of 2146 Cowden, yesterday charged that she and the Rev. Claude C. Williams, Presbyterian minister of Little Rock, were whipped with a harness strap by six men near Earle, Ark., where they had gone to hold a negro funeral.

Both Miss Blagden and Mr. Williams were under medical treatment yesterday for bruises which they said they received in the flogging in a soybean field near Earle Monday afternoon.

Miss Blagden, who is vacationing in Memphis, was born and reared here and formerly did social work with the Associated Charities. Her brother, George Blagden, Memphis attorney, four years ago won the Toronto swimming marathon.

**Asked To Preach**

At Little Rock yesterday Mr. Williams, vice president of the American Federation of Teachers, and southern representative of the Religious and Labor Foundation, said that while visiting Memphis Monday he was asked to go to Earle to preach a funeral for Frank Weems, negro, reported killed in a labor dispute at Earle, but whose body has not been found. The negro's wife has denied her husband had been killed, stating he often went away for two or three months.

Mr. Williams said he asked Miss Blagden, an acquaintance, if she wanted to accompany him, and she accepted. He said they drove to Earle, where they were accosted by six men in a car, who forced them to drive several miles to the field where the flogging occurred.

Miss Blagden said she was struck several times with the strap in an effort to make her reveal why she was in Earle. Mr. Williams was more severely beaten, she said, being struck at least 14 times. Both Miss Blagden and Mr. Williams said they could identify their assailants, whom they described as well-dressed, apparently respectable men.

At Marion, Ark., yesterday Sheriff Howard Curlin said he had heard nothing of the beating except through newspapers and a telephone call from Newell N. Fowler of Memphis, attorney for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, but that he would be glad to investigate if a complaint is made.

**Placed On Train**

Following the beating, Miss Blagden said, she was placed on a train back to Memphis. Mr. Williams said he was escorted out of Crittenden County in his automobile and warned never to return.

Mr. Williams, who is 41, was fined $100 and sentenced to 90 days in jail last year during a relief workers' strike at Fort Smith, Ark., he said, adding that the case was appealed and has not come up for hearing.

Protest at the attack and requests for an investigation were made to President Roosevelt yesterday by Norman Thomas, Socialist leader, to Governor Futrell of Arkansas by the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, and to Sheriff Curlin by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

# ARKANSAS FLOGGINGS ATTACKED BY PICKETS

### Placards Denouncing Robinson Are Carried by Groups at Convention Hall.

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PHILADELPHIA, June 24.—Students from thirteen States, attending the Summer School of the League for Industrial Democracy, came from New York today to picket the Democratic convention and denounce President Roosevelt, Senator Robinson and the New Deal for conditions in Arkansas.

Miss Mary Hillyer, secretary of the New York League for Industrial Democracy, explained that the delegates had hoped to see Senator Robinson and "protest against the peonage and terror that goes on in his State." A delegation from the Teachers Union, she said, had made a futile attempt to see the Senator this morning.

Without interference from police, but in the face of an occasional threat from Southern delegates to "rip down the placards," about thirty pickets marched in the rain for two hours during the afternoon in front of the headquarters hotel of the Democratic National Convention.

"Arkansas share-croppers are flogged—ask Robinson why," read one of the signs.

Others bore the legends:

"Joseph T. Robinson, statesman in Philadelphia, protector of floggers in Arkansas."

"Cotton slaves lashed. What price Democracy?"

"Arkansas share-croppers ask for $1 a day. They get bullets, whips, pellagra."

"Arkansas Democracy—flogging of ministers and teachers. Ask Joe Robinson why."

"The New Deal in Arkansas—race hatred, oppression, brutality, night riding, starvation, officials' negligence."

Heading the delegation, with Miss Hillyer, were George Edwards of Dallas, Texas, chairman of the American Student Union; Leo Rosenbloom of New York, secretary of the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, nd Paul Rasmussen of Chicago, general organizer for the Workers alliance.

**ST. PAUL, MINN.**

**NEWS**

JUN 19 1936

# ARKANSAS OUTRAGE

IT IS to be hoped that the federal investigation of the flogging outrage in Earle, Ark., will be more than a gesture to satisfy political considerations.

The fact that G-men have been assigned to the job would seem to guarantee this, unless they have been instructed otherwise.

Certainly the brutal mob attack on a Presbyterian minister and a social worker, member of a prominent family of Memphis, is a matter which should be followed by thorough inquiry and punishment.

These two went to a Negro's home to attend his funeral and to investigate the circumstances which led to his death. The dead man was the victim of increasing violence displayed against unfortunate tenant farmers who are trying to organize against an economic situation which is worse than the old slavery.

It results from the collapse of cotton and the ill-advised government attempt to pay a subsidy for nonproduction which seems to have resulted in wholesale eviction of tenant farmers from even their miserable hovels.

A report on this situation has been pigeonholed by the administration, undoubtedly for political reasons, but the effort to hold down the lid appears not to be entirely successful. It is forcing explosions of the kind revealed in Arkansas.

Conditions must be pretty bad when two whites in the south risk ostracism and personal danger to attend a Negro's funeral in order to protest.

Lets' have the facts behind this trouble, despite the efforts of Sen. Joe Robinson and other Democratic leaders to cover up.

**N. Y. EVENING POST**

JUN 25 1936

# RULE BY WHIP IN THE LAND OF COTTON

Congratulations to the editor of the Earle, Ark., *Enterprise*.

His editorial on the cotton strike succeeds where humane appeal has failed.

His open approval of rule by the whip brings home as nothing else could the reality of the Terror in Arkansas.

Hitherto reports of conditions in that State had been discounted, even by the most sympathetic.

They seemed too terrible to be true.

But when the editor of a newspaper in the heart of the strike area boasts that whipping "has produced results" in forcing men to work against their will, there can be no doubt of the reversion to slave law, mob violence and Fascist methods in Arkansas.

"Tenants are all on the job," the *Enterprise* informs its readers, "and day laborers are plentiful, and glad to work for 75 cents a day, instead of the $1.50 demanded by the union.

**"It is true that a few foreign agitators representing the Southern Tenant Farmers Union have felt the sting of a backhand applied where it would do the most good. This method has produced results where all other remedies less drastic have failed.**

"The greatest hue and cry arises from the fact that a white woman was forced to endure the indignity of a light whipping. Opinions vary as to the wisdom of this act. It is hard for us to condone the action. However, there is no doubt but what the woman was completely out of her place. Assisting in conducting a Negro funeral is no place for a white woman in the South . . ."

**No "furrin' " agitator from the Yankee North** or across the river in Memphis, Tenn., could hope to present so graphic a picture of what is going on in Arkansas.

* * *

What are we going to do about it?

This is not a race problem.

There are almost twice as many white croppers and tenants in the South as there are black.

Nor is it merely an economic problem, though the difference between the $4.50 a week planters are paying and the $9 a week pickers are asking may be the difference between bringing children up in fair health or drooping with pellagra.

It is above all a political problem.

**Taken in connection with the murder and flogging of union organizers in Tampa by the Klan and the murder of union automobile organizers by the Black Legion in Detroit and the mob violence of hired vigilantes on the Pacific Coast, it spells a menace of major proportions to human liberty in America.**

If workers can be flogged and driven to work at the point of guns, if fundamental liberties can be crushed, in Arkansas, how soon before workers are flogged and driven to their work in Birmingham and in West Virginia—and in New York City?

The South has become the training ground for the forces of Fascism, the use of the whip to enslave labor and cut its wages.

No one who pretends to be a friend of liberty in America, whether he be a silk-hatted Liberty Leaguer like Alfred E. Smith or a New Deal Democrat like Senator Robinson of Arkansas, can keep quiet about Arkansas and escape condemnation for hypocrisy.

"Canst thou not behold the pallid faces, the emaciated forms, the sweating brows, the trembling hands of millions of women and children workers...left at the mercy of those who have neither pity nor charity for the oppressed and the poor?"

Senator Robinson put that question to the Tories in his speech to the Democratic convention last night.

We put the question to him today:

**Will he support a thorough Federal investigation into the operations "of those who have neither pity nor charity for the oppressed and the poor" in his own Arkansas?**

Agriculture - 1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas

# Sharecroppers, City Workers Attend Commonwealth College

MENA, Ark., July 2 (FP).—The development of Commonwealth College into a specifically southern college for workers and farmers, long more of an ideal than a reality, has taken solid form at the summer session which opened on the wooded campus in the southern Ozark mountains June 29.

While the customary interest and thirst for knowledge combined with vacation features at a low charge has been shown by Northern and Eastern students, there are over a dozen Southern workers and farmers enrolled this summer. Richard B. Whitten, the new director who was installed last fall, is also a Southerner. During the year the southern orientation was manifest in the presence of sharecroppers and farm tenants—union men and women—and Southern miners and industrial workers.

### A Southern Slant

The school courses are given a southern slant in the emphasis on farm problems and on those on the industrial workers and the unemployed.

On the beautiful campus, with its natural swimming pools and mountain tops in hiking distance, America's studious workers and farmers are thrown together for several months exchanging ideas, comparing working conditions and union strength, learning how to assemble facts and marshal them effectively and how to carry the message of labor's hopes and labor's strength to their fellows back home.

Skilled and experienced teachers, backed by a well kept-up library and a spirit of academic fearlessness and freedom, stimulate the students. A farm and woodlot, laundry, cannery and other college auxiliaries at which the student works a given number of hours a week, keep him in contact with the workaday world.

### No Luxury Here

Students live in cottages scattered about the campus and take care of their own rooms. College meals are wholesome though there is no luxury. Both college and students are too poor for that. The fee for the entire eight weeks of the summer session, including meals, room, laundry, campus recreation and instruction, is only $40. There is a student from China and an instructor from Japan.

NEW YORK, N. Y.
SUN

JUL 9 - 1936

### Right There at Home.

If it isn't impertinent somebody ought to ask Senator JOE ROBINSON whether he has heard about some of the communications being sent abroad by share-croppers in his own State of Arkansas. The Senator was profoundly moved by the Supreme Court's decision in the New York minimum wage case. He produced his heart right out on the platform of the Democratic convention and let it bleed for the edification of the audience, saying:

> O blind and impartial justice, what blunders are committed in thy name! Liberty, art thou both deaf and dumb? Canst thou not behold the pallid faces, the emaciated forms, the sweating brows, the trembling hands of millions of women and children workers who by the decision are left at the mercy of those who have neither pity nor charity for the oppressed and the poor?

Writing from Earl, Arkansas, a woman whose discretion conceals her name under the initials "M. S.," gives, in the magazine *Letters*, this description of conditions in her neighborhood:

> The planters ran all the Negroes out of town yesterday morning. . . . Thay beat up several of them. Thay beat —— with an ax handle. I heard that thay liked to beat —— to death. . . . Boy, thay sure did beat ——. Thay beat her with a fishen cane and a whip stock and their fists. . . . Told her she was the president of the dam union. . . . Told her she better not say a word about it, nor write a word in to Washington, if she did thay would sink her in the river.

From Forrest City, Arkansas, a correspondent who signs himself "J. P." sends to the same periodical this letter:

> I joined the union to try to help stop the unfairness that we have in Ark., and it seems that all that is striving to that end is in for more trouble than ever. The planter is the law in every respect, they whip and evict our people for no reason except their union activities. While the strike was on they guarded the roads by day and by night. On one occasion a man was stopped that was going for a Dr. for his wife that was confined. After telling the guards his mission and explaining that he would have to go many miles around, he was told that they didn't care if he had to go by way of St. Louis.

Two other share-croppers wrote to similar import, but they live in Alabama, which is out of Senator ROBINSON'S bailiwick, although perhaps it should be considered that the further abuses are from that bailiwick the easier it may be for the Senator to weep over them. It isn't far from Little Rock to Earl; Forrest City is right on the way between the two. If the Senator really wishes to writhe in rhetorical anguish over sweating brows and emaciated forms, further embellished by the marks of belts and ax handles; if he really wishes to get fresh evidence at first hand from persons left at the mercy of those who have neither pity nor charity, a summer day's automobile ride from his own home ought to supply him with material for a dozen orations.

# Sharecroppers End Strike in Arkansas; Union Claims Victory, but Employers Scoff

By The Associated Press.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., July 9.—The "general strike" among tenant farmers, sharecroppers and day laborers in East Arkansas was ended today by declaration of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, said the strike had been successful in forcing "higher wages for thousands of day laborers," and in demonstrating "that Negro and white workers in the cotton fields have become aware of their common interests, and are willing to get together and fight for them."

Farmers and officers in Cross, Crittenden and St. Francis Counties, in which the strike was called, insisted that the strike had never been effective, that labor had been plentiful at 75 cents a day and that the calling off of the strike was "just another publicity gag."

The strike reached a climax a few weeks ago, when Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis social worker, and the Rev. Claude Williams of Little Rock charged that they were flogged by a band of men near Earle, Ark. They went there seeking proof of the reported death from a "beating" of Frank Weems, 40, Negro sharecropper.

Sheriff Howard Curlin has declared that Weems is still alive and that he will produce him soon.

"Over a wide area," said the statement of the union's executive council, "we won an average wage of $1 a day for day labor. In some counties we won $1.25 for a 10-hour day. For the first time in the history of the union, a number of union contracts were signed with smaller landowners."

"The strike," said the announcement, "is only the beginning of the struggle of the disinherited to come into their own. We appeal for continued aid in this struggle."

A conference of union attorneys was held here recently to discuss possible action with reference to the alleged floggings, but declined to say how they would proceed unless through civil suits. Sheriff Curlin invited the alleged victims to lay their charges before him but this was never done.

Sheriff Crulin at Marion when informed of the union's announcement, declared there had been no evidence of a strike in Crittenden County.

Sheriff C. M. Stacy of Cross County, said: "The laborers have been getting from 75 cents to $1 per day all season, and the same scale still prevails. The crop has been worked and there has been no trouble about working it."

MILWAUKEE, WIS.
LEADER

JUL 14 1936

# CIVIL SUITS PLANNED IN ARKANSAS FLOGGINGS

Civil suits are planned on behalf of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis born social worker, and the Rev. Claude C. Williams of Little Rock, who were flogged at Earle, Ark., while they were investigating the reported murder of a Negro member of the Southern Tenant Farmers union. Widespread protests resulted in the announcement of a federal probe of the beatings. Several similar floggings have been reported. Both Miss Blagden and the Rev. Mr. Williams are sure they can identify the six well-dressed men who beat them.

Amazing was the frank approval of the attacks by The Earle Enterprise of the whippings. The weekly, the only paper in Crittenden county, said: "This method has produced results," and condemned "foreign agitators."

A well-known Memphis attorney, Judge A. B. Pittman, has been retained by the Civil Liberties Union in co-operation with the other defense groups to make a survey of the situation in Arkansas and Memphis, Tenn., growing out of the strike of the cotton choppers for $1.50 a day.

In addition to suits in behalf of those flogged are numerous defense cases both in Arkansas and in Memphis. Most of these are appeals from summary convictions in magistrates' courts after bitterly prejudiced "trials." Included are cases in-

volving evictions of some 25 families from plantations following union activity and without full accounting of what the families had earned and a dozen or so cases of strikers and organizers charged with "vagrancy," "trespassing" and "enticing labor" and given sentences or huge fines which must be worked off on leased convict farms or on private plantations.

The Chicago Civil Liberties committee is fighting the extradition of a Negro who before fleeing for his life defended his home in Arkansas from raiders and is wanted there on an "assault with intent to murder" charge. A hearing will be held soon before Gov. Horner of Illinois.

Appeals are pending in the cases of four members of the Memphis Workers' alliance convicted of disorderly conduct at the beginning of the strike for picketing the Tennessee side of the Harrahan bridge across the Mississippi river to prevent the herding of strikebreakers from Memphis slums into Arkansas. Finally there are the cases of five members of the Tenants' union who fled from the Arkansas terror to Memphis. Following word from Arkansas planters, the police raided the house where the fugitives were staying and arrested them without any form of warrant. They were fined $25 on charges of disorderly conduct and vagrancy.

# ARKANSAS PLANNING SHARECROPPER SIFT

## Futrell Announces Support Of Southern Governors In Hunt For Solution

MEMPHIS, TENN., Aug. 18—(AP)—Gov. J. M. Futrell of Arkansas today had the support of Southern Governors, planters and share-croppers in his proposed conference on the sharecropper problem in the South.

Planters and sharecroppers were in accord with his announced intention of seeking a solution to the farming system in wide-spread use throughout the South principally in the cotton belt.

Each group has promised to cooperate.

"I was glad to see the conference called," said R. B. Snowden, Jr., Hughes, Ark., planter who has 50 wage-earning families working on his 1,000-acre plantation.

"I hope it will be another step toward breaking up the tenant farming system," adding that he believed the "small unit home-owned system" would be the ideal solution.

J. O. E. Beck, Sr., also of Hughes, who has a 8,000-acre farm cultivated by 200 families, said he favored the conference but blamed unrest among east Arkansas sharecroppers to "outside agitators."

He referred to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which has sponsored strikes in the cotton fields. The union announced yesterday that the sharecroppers would cooperate in a discussion of their problems.

D. B. Woodlard, of Clarkedale, defended the sharecropper system, declaring "a good sharecropper under a good landlord has the best opportunity to get ahead of any day laborer in the United States today." However, he favored the proposed study.

"After so much folderol about sharecroppers," one prominent planter said "any investigation would be good."

# FARMERS ASK FUTRELL TO PROVE 'SINCERITY'

## Union Agrees to Co-operate in Study of Tenant Conditions in South.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Aug. 17.—(AP)—Governor Futrell, of Arkansas, was asked today by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union to prove his "sincerity" in proposing a south-wide conference on the share-cropper problem, as the organization agreed to co-operate in a study of tenant conditions on southern farms.

The union, professed spokesman for 30,000 share-croppers in the east Arkansas cotton fields, long the scene of landlord-sharecropper controversies, agreed to "lend its fullest co-operation" as governors of southern states indorsed the Futrell plan.

J. R. Butler, of White county, Arkansas, president of the union, declared a policy of "land for the landless" as he called on Futrell to demonstrate his sincerity in a statement issued here.

Butler said Futrell's proposal "marks a radical departure from his former attitude toward the dispossessed and disinherited citizens of his state," and that he had been "one of the most bitter opponents of the organized sharecroppers and other farm laborers."

The union president referred to Futrell's consistent refusal to interfere in the strike trouble which he blamed on "radicals" seeking there own profit at the expense of sharecroppers.

Futrell, Butler said, could show his good faith by "using his power to force local authorities to produce the body of Frank Weems, who was murdered in an attack on a union picket line near Earle, Ark.;" by "bringing to justice persons guilty of floggings," and by ordering the "release of all union members held on the St. Francis county convict farm and in the Crittenden county jail."

# Croppers Doubt Futrell's Plan For Parleys

(By Federated Press)

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Aug. 19.—The "sincerity" of Gov. J. M. Futrell's proposal for conferences aimed to solve Arkansas's knotty sharecropper problem has been questioned by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which at the same time promised its full cooperation.

Futrell's plans call for a commission of landowners, educators, businessmen and sharecroppers to map a statewide program at a coming meeting in Hot Springs. This session would be followed by a larger conference of representatives from several other states.

Futrell, who is due to leave office in January, was attacked by President J. R. Butler of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union as "one of organized sharecroppers and other the most bitter opponents of the farm laborers." Butler, however, declared that Futrell's action "marks a radical departure from his former attitude toward the dispossessed and disinherited citizens of the State."

# SOUTH INDORSES PLAN FOR TENANCY STUDIES

## Futrell's Proposal Lauded by Governors

## WOULD CALL CONFERENCE

### Arkansan Already Moving to Name State's Representatives at Projected Discussion Seeking Farm Problem Solution

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Aug. 15.—Southern governors today expressed interest and pledged co-operation in a proposal by Governor Futrell of Arkansas that a Dixie-wide conference be convened for impartial study of the south's 70-year-old sharecropper and tenant farm problems.

Futrell, who has announced his intention of retiring from public life at the end of his present term in January, indicated he desired to devote his efforts in the last months of the governorship to working out a solution for the tenancy question, a source of discord in the farming south since reconstruction days.

He disclosed that he was already planning to name an Arkansas commission on the subject, to form a nucleus for the proposed southwide group. Hot Springs, Ark., far removed from the troubled East Arkansas sharecropper belt, was proposed as a meeting place for the commission.

**Federal Aid Needed**

The governor said he felt a solution could be worked out through co-operation of federal and state agencies, indicating he believed a program for assisting tenant farmers in purchasing their own farms through long-term financing offered the brightest hope for what he described as an "underprivileged class."

Gov. James V. Allred of Texas was one of the first to pledge co-operation.

"The governor of Arkansas has a very worthy objective. I am in complete sympathy with any concerted move to change farm tenants into farm owners," he said at Austin.

Governor McAlister of Tennessee said he would be "very glad to cooperate in any way possible to help find a solution," and that he would, if necessary, appoint representatives to gather information or confer with others on the subject.

At Columbia, S. C., Gov. Olin D. Johnston, the son of a tenant farmer, said:

"My father was a tenant farmer and I worked as a boy on a tenant farm, so naturally I would be interested in anything that will aid the farmers, especially the tenant farmers, of the state and nation.

"I will give most careful consideration to the suggestions of Governor Futrell when I receive them from him in detail."

**Mississippi Favorable**

In Mississippi Governor White commented "We have no sharecropper difficulties in Mississippi that I know anything about" and Mississippi State Commissioner of Agriculture J. C. Holton expressed the same view. Holton added, however, "It might be a good idea for the friends of the south to get together and work out some plan for stopping all this propaganda about sharecroppers that is designed to hurt the south."

"It never hurts to discuss a situation," said Governor Leche of Louisiana.

Governor George C. Peery of Virginia pointed out that the sharecropper issue was not as important in his state as elsewhere in the south because of the smaller proportion of farms devoted to cotton, but that he would be "glad to look into the matter, as any collection of facts is always valuable."

Attorney General Cummings said in Washington this week that a federal grand jury in Little Rock would be asked to investigate charges of peonage in Arkansas cotton fields. Brien McMahon, assistant attorney general, expressed interest today in the southwide conference proposed by Futrell, but said it would have no effect upon the government's proposed investigation.

It was disclosed that Governor Futrell had been discussing the southern conference with leaders in this state for many weeks, following the strike called by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in East Arkansas during the spring.

The proposed Arkansas commission, of 40 or 50 persons, would include sharecroppers, landowners, educators, social workers, business and professional men.

Governor Futrell said the tenant problem has been developing "for decades and in recent years has grown to such a serious condition that the problem must be settled if Arkansas is to have peace among its citizenship and agriculture continues to hold its rightful place as the state's chief resource.

"The plight of the sharecropper may be exaggerated in some reports, but the thing itself—the system—is eating at the vitals of the south's economic structure and whether exaggerated or not, is of such serious character as to call for immediate and exhaustive study and examination with a view to its definite settlement," he said.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

## Minister Finds Signs Of 'Terrorism' In Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., June 8—(AP)—The Rev. James Myers, industrial secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, said in a statement here today there was evidence of denial of civil liberties and "widespread terrorism in eastern Arkansas where the sharecropper problem has long been acute and where a cotton choppers' strike is currently in progress.

Dr. Myers left for his New York office tonight after visiting in the field and conferring in Little Rock with the pastors of many of the city's churches.

Sam E. Whitaker, special investigator who was sent into the strike area last week by the U. S. attorney general, was back at his home in Chattanooga today preparing a report on his findings.

**N. Y. EVENING POST**

JUN 25 1936

### Equal Justice

*To the Editor of New York Post:*

Sir—Copy of telegram to the Hon. Henry Horner, Governor of Illinois, Springfield, Ill.:

"This committee, representing over two hundred thousand workers of all races, respectfully urge that Sam Bennett, Negro member of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, be not returned to Arkansas.

"The facts in this case indicate that Bennett's only crime is that he refused to work in a field when physically unable to do so.

"In a civilized society Bennett's act would not be termed a crime. But in Arkansas being a Negro farmhand sensible and civilized enough to unite with white farm hands for improvement of their equally desperate condition is an offense punishable by lynching. Illinois, which gave Abraham Lincoln to the nation, must now be a party to such a travesty upon justice nor besmirch the hallowed memory of the Great Emancipator."

FRANK R. CROSSWAITH,
Chairman, Negro Labor Committee.

## E. B. McKINNEY, TENANT FARM LEADER HERE

Working in the interest of the sharecroppers is Elliot B. McKinney of Memphis, a visitor in the city last week. Mr. McKinney has lived and worked in Marked Tree, Ark., where there is an active fight against abuses of the tenant farming system.

He is vice president of the Southern Tenant Farmers union, composed of white and Negro laborers. This organization, he says, has 40,000 members in six states, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Tennessee, Texas and Mississippi. The union was begun July 11, 1934.

In speaking of the terror and fighting between sharecroppers and farm overseers, Mr. McKinney said, "This has tended to make the members of our organization cling together more strongly, instead of hurting us." He told how his own house was bullet-ridden and his family driven away from home in attempts to stop his activities.

"The Southern Tenant Farmers union first began," the organizer stated, "to get justice in AAA allotments, better schools, and better wages. The union has gotten the average wage raised from 50 cents to $1.00 a day. We want to get a system of fair contracts for the laborers."

Mr. McKinley related how he has appeared many times before senators and congressmen in efforts to gain their assistance. He had a conference with Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt this April and found in her a sympathetic audience. "The very life of our movement has come from financial help given by friends in the East," he commented, "it is encouraging to receive aid from rich people."

The union leader came here from Muskogee where he was in an executive conference of the organization. He visited his brother, E. A. McKinney, 849 Freeman avenue, Kansas side, and left July 8 for St. Louis where he attended meetings Saturday on behalf of the movement.

**CHARLOTTE, N. C. NEWS**

JUN 21 1936

### We'uns Is Backward.

The literary revolt from the loyalties of Tom Page and Tom Dixon, who dwelt in a noble land that never really was, in favor of the clinical observations of Erskine Caldwell William Faulkner, Grace Lumpkin and Paul Green, who regard the South darkly through the smoke of the tobacco roads, has had a curious effect. The thing is marked on the front pages of the newspapers, particularly north of the Line.

In Little Rock, Arkansas, Claude C. Williams, a preacher plus, and Miss Willie Sue Blagden, a maiden of 29 and a social worker, said they were beaten when they tried to investigate reports of a Negro's death in a cotton-choppers strike. Attorney General Cummings ordered a special investigation. The story was played with inordinate emphasis on front pages from Key West to Chicago. It was the story, mind you, of a hysterical pair who poked their noses where they didn't belong, and who probably had no more conception of the economics and hard history of cotton tenancy than, say, Miss Shirley Temple. But it emerged as a great newspaper story even after the dead Negro turned up alive. All because it dealt with Problem People.

At the same time, in Kent, Ohio, a labor dispute was in progress. Six men were shot. Forty-six armed guards held the Black and Decker Electric company plant as a fortress. They were hired warriors, repelling and attacking strikers. It was war, war reminiscent of Homestead.

But due to the new literature which has pictured so sensually and drearily the squatter world, the low animal creatures, incestuous and half-perverted, of the cabins in the cotton, the first story was pounced upon in delight by headline editors. The second was played down to the terse announcement: "Six Persons Wounded in Strike War at Kent."

All of which seems to show that, one way or another, either under the magnolias or behind the tobacco barns, the South must submit to the dramatists. A couple of meddlers get themselves whupped by the heavy-footed mean-faced illiterates of the pine country, who know just enough to mind their own business, and Norman Thomas, all the ready-made liberals and the federals rush headlong to the rescue. But in Kent, Ohio, in a pitched battle between company guards and strikers, six men are shot; and the country sighs, "Ho, hum; another labor disturbance." We don't get the distinction. Just why is a little skin off the tails of two visiting agitators so much more of a news story than the shedding of real red blood?

## The Sharecroppers Fight

By LESTER B. GRANGER

It has been springtime in Arkansas for several weeks, but a dreadful, loathsome spring. Spring is a season of beauty and promise ordinarily, a season when young love roams country lanes, when poets rhapsodize on the perfection of nature, and winter-starved mankind looks to the plow and hoe as symbols of the fruitfulness that grows out of winter's frost. But for 75,000 Negro families in Arkansas state there is little beauty and no promise of fruitfulness in the green fields that stretch around them for hundreds of miles. There is instead the threat of brutal terror and violent bloodshed and the certain promise that their desolation this summer will be only slightly less than the hardships suffered during the long winter months.

**Personal Contact**

It has not been many weeks since I came back from that section, since I drove along the highways of the cotton belt, stopped to talk with black men and women who sat on the steps of their cabins, hungry and desperate. I picked up their children, thin, pitiful, little youngsters suffering from rickets and scurvy, who stared at me out of their mournful eyes with distrustful wonder. I gave lifts to overalled laborers, shambling down the dusty roads. I visited the Memphis headquarters of the Southern Farm Tenants' Union and talked with a group of organizers, weatherbeaten, inarticulate men who are keeping that amazing organization together. I attended a meeting of union members, late at night in a crazily-built cabin far back from the road, squatting against the wall in the light of a single cabin.

One day and two nights I spent as a guest in the cabins of sharecroppers. I lay down, but did sleep on a pallet as hard as the floor on which it was stretched. I ate fat-back and grits one day, and neck bones and black-eyed peas another day, ashamed that my stomach revolted from this food which was the daily fare of my hosts for most of the year . . . Ashamed that I was able to go on down the road and buy a can of sardines from a country store while the family which I had just left probably wondered where the next day's meal would come from. I did not sleep the next night on my comfortable bed in Memphis.

**All Bound Together**

These articles are the result of that trip. They are my effort to tell to Negro America, through the Associated Negro Press, my own impressions of the fight which Negro and poor white families of Arkansas and neighboring states are waging to pull themselves out of an existence which is more dreadful than anything that I have ever before seen in my journeys about these United States. They are an attempt to convince Negroes in northern and southern cities that this is their fight, and a fight which must be won by their support.

While black America has watched with tense interest the gallant struggle made by Ethiopia against the murderous advance of Mussolini, these Arkansas sharecroppers are carrying on without attention an even more gallant and dangerous struggle. The Ethiopians use their primitive weapons to fight and retreat, fight and retreat, falling back after defeat into the comparative safety of their native hills. The sharecroppers have no weapons, other than a desperate courage and they cannot retreat. Once the battle has begun they cannot quit, but must fight until they win—or are wiped out.

Negro farmers fought once be-

fore in Arkansas—and were wiped out. The Elaine Riots of 1919 were caused by the efforts of Negro sharecroppers to organize against outrageous robbery practiced upon them by their landlords. Discovering the organization, the landlords formed vigilante bands to stamp it out. The Elaine riots resulted; a town was put to flames; unarmed Negroes, men, women and babies, were shot down in cold blood. Grand juries refused to indict; the federal government was silent; the union was smashed, and Arkansas plantations were kept safe for landlord robbery.

**Robbery Nothing Else**

Today that robbery is more outrageous than ever. AAA crop-reduction has forced thousands of families off the land. Some of them stay as laborers at starvation wages. In cotton picking time last year a strong man must work at top speed for ten and twelve hours a day to earn as much as $1.50 to $2.00 a day. Children of tender age worked the same hours for fifty cents or less. The federal government winked an eye while AAA checks were stolen from tenant farmers. Landlords ran, and still run stores at which their help must buy their supplies—and charge double prices for rotten stuff.

Malaria, pellagra and similar sickness abounds. When these families take sick most of them simply stay sick until they get well or die, for there are no physicians who can treat patients without money. To reach one cabin I walked through mud to my ankles, for the cabin stood in a pool of water which had drained into the depression and stayed there, stagnant and ill-smelling. Inside a mother sat with an ailing baby that was covered with dirty rags. Their drinking water came from a well a hundred yards away, down a slope from a neighboring cabin, where it was certain to be infected with typhoid germs.

The man in that household had worked hard all the year previous. He had "made" four bales of cotton, of which two belonged to the landlord. He ended up the year with not quite enough to settle his debts, owing "the boss man" a trifle greater debt. On the next plantation his white neighbor was in exactly the same situation. These families are not exceptions. They are the rule, except for one thing. Both men belong to the Southern Farm Tenants' Union.

Next week I will tell what the union is, and what it is doing.

Memphis, Tenn., Com'rcial Appeal
May 21, 1936

# SCHOOL IS PLANNED FOR SHARECROPPERS

## Institute of Behavior Is Announced by C. B. Brandon

Character training to develop a high level of sharecropper service and insure social security for Arkansas negro tenant farmers will be undertaken in August by a Landowners-Tenants Institute which will be open in Little Rock with the backing of chambers of commerce and other organizations.

By improving sharecropper efficiency the Institute will seek to offset the threat of improved farm machinery and thoughtless agitation now confronting the 60 per cent of the negro population residing on tenant farms.

C. C. Brandon, Sr., founder of the Institute and a professor at Arkansas Baptist College for Negroes, hopes the Little Rock school for advancement of sharecroppers will find counterparts in smaller institutes in each of more than 30 counties. The training course will require a week.

"We propose to build this institute," Brandon said, "because nothing is written in our books to show sharecropper tenants or the house servants the exact behavior attitude proper for the sharecropper farmer. Nor can the negro discover from our present curriculum the exact attitude he should assume towards the landlord or the peculiar slant that offers the richest results for the millions of negroes on sharecropper farms."

# Damage Suits Filed In Arkansas Flogging Case

JONESBORO, ARK., Aug. 29.—(AP)—Three persons filed Federal Court damage suits here today charging beatings in connection with East Arkansas' sharecropper controversy.

Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis social worker, accused five men of flogging her last June and asked $15,000 judgment against Boss Caney, Earl Cherry, Ernest Richards, Tony Thompson and Percy Mangus, described as Crittenden County residents. They denied the charges.

Similar $15,000 suits, naming overlapping defendants, were filed by Eliza Nolden, described by the Southern Tenant Farmers Union as a 60-year-old negro woman formerly of Earle, Ark., and now of Memphis, and J. M. Reese, who gave his home address as Boliver County, Mis

# ARKANSAS SHARECROPPERS DOUBT SINCERITY OF FUTRELL IN CONFERENCE BROADCAST

## ALLEGE FIRST MOVE SHOULD BE TO RELEASE MEN HELD IN RIOT CHARGES

## Union Head Hints At Murder of Followers

MEMPHIS, Aug. 27.—(ANP)—Sincerity of Gov. J. M. Futrell of Arkansas in initiating a movement to solve the South's 70-year-old sharecropper and farm tenant problem was questioned last week by the interracial Southern Tenant Farmers union which conducted a strike recently for better pay and improved living conditions.

"Gov. Futrell's action marks a radical departure from his former attitude toward the dispossessed and disinherited citizens of his state," said J. R. Butler, union head of White County, Ark., who added Futrell had been "one of the most bitter opponents of the organized sharecroppers and other farm laborers" and had refused to interfere in violence by planters in the recent strike which the governor said was fostered by "radicals."

At the same time the union, which says it has 30,000 Negro and white members in the East Arkansas cotton country, agreed to cooperate fully with Gov. Futrell's proposal for a Southwide conference on the farm tenancy problem which has met the approval of several Dixie governors and sociologists.

"Meanwhile the governor could show his good faith by using his power to produce the body of Frank Weems, who was murdered on a union picket line several weeks ago near Earle, Ark., by bringing to justice the floggers of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, the Rev. Claude Williams and others, and by ordering the release of all union members held in the Ft. Francis county convict farm and in the Crittenden county jail," Butler said.

When told of the union's attitude, Gov. Futrell said in Little Rock, "If they doubt my sincerity, that's all I have to say." He also denied statements that he had attempted to break the strike in every way by saying, "No forces acting under authority of the state were employed to stop this strike. I didn't interfere in one way or another.

"The governor has no authority whatever to go into any county and make an investigation of crime. No money is appropriated for that purpose. Enforcement of the law is left in the hands of authorities of each county to act through the grand jury and the prosecuting attorney."

of his organization and submitted to lengthy questioning before it was officially decided the minister's idea was "impractical." Last year at the annual convention held in New Orleans a similar decision was rendered.

This year, however, the committee in addition voted a recommendation for wide publicity of the attitude of the official organization of colored physicians. It is believed this stand was taken because of Reverend Carnegie's activities during the past year and publicity which attended them. For a while spirited written discussion appeared in print some months ago between the minister and well known physicians who oposed the movement.

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# Arkansas Chief Executive Visits Evicted Colony

Constitution 2-28-36

DYESS COLONY, ARK., Feb. 27.—(AP)—Without publicly committing himself, Gov. J. Marion Futrell today personally visited a tent colony of Cross County sharecroppers who claim to have been evicted recently from cotton plantations and in whose behalf appeals were made to the executive for protection against alleged terrorism.

Following the visit to the colony near Parkin, the Governor proceeded by motor to Dyess Colony, Federal rehabilitation project, to spend the night. He was accompanied by Floyd Sharp, Arkansas Works Progress administrator; T. Roy Reid, regional resettlement director, and A. M. Rogers, RA official.

Gov. Futrell and the Federal officials spent an hour at the colony talking with the sharecroppers and inspecting conditions of the tented group of 108 persons where the latest flare-up in the long standing east Arkansas sharecropper dispute occurred.

Last week President J. R. Butler, of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union charged that sticks of unexploded dynamite had been hurled into the colony at night in an attempt to intimidate negro members of the union.

Sheriff C. M. Stacy investigated, said his inquiry failed to substantiate the reports, and described the affair as "only a publicity stunt to gain sympathy for the union."

Then the union's secretary, H. L. Mitchell, wired Gov. Futrell to send troops or rangers "to protect evicted sharecroppers." The chief executive said he was without authority to take such action unless the county's civil authorities requested him to intervene.

# TERRORISM INQUIRY OPENED BY FUTRELL

Commercial Appeal

## Evicted Tenants Charged Persecution

2-28-36

LITTLE ROCK, Feb. 27—Governor Futrell today personally investigated alleged terrorism against a tent colony of Cross County sharecroppers at Parkin and proceeded by motor to Dyess colony, where he conferred tonight with federal officials on construction of schools at the federal rehabilitation project.

Accompanied by Floyd Sharp, Arkansas works progress administrator; T. Roy Reid, regional resettlement director, and A. M. Rogers, resettlement official, Governor Futrell spent an hour at the Parkin colony talking with sharecroppers and inspecting conditions of the tented group.

The governor's visit to Parkin followed a request from H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, for troops or rangers "to protect evicted sharecroppers." Gov. Futrell said he was without authority to take such action unless the county's civil authorities requested him to intervene.

Sheriff C. M. Stacy of Cross County, who investigated charges of J. R. Butler, president of the union, that sticks of unexploded dynamite had been hurled into the camp of negroes, said his inquiry failed to substantiate the reports and described the affair as "only a publicity stunt to gain sympathy for the union."

Atlanta, Ga. Constitution
March 1, 1936

# NEGRO FARM PROBLEM NEARING SETTLEMENT

## 2 Confer on Plan To Remove Planters Where They Can Bo Back to Work.

PARKIN, Ark., Feb. 29.—(AP)—A solution to the controversy centering about a group of negro sharecroppers housed in a tent near Parkin was reported near this afternoon.

Sherwood Eddy, author and Y. M. C. A. figure, and Dr. William R. Amberson, a professor of the University of Tennessee Medical College at Memphis, conferred this afternoon with a number of planters on a plan to remove the tenant farmers from the colony to farms where they can go back to work.

Earlier in the day, Mayor H. H. Melhorn revealed that "three or four ring-leaders" of the sharecropper colony had been warned to leave town after he said individual tenants had expressed a desire to accept contracts landowners had offered them but feared colony leaders "might throw them into the river."

"There won't be any trouble," Mayor Melhorn said. "The ring-leaders promised to leave rather than face prosecution. The rest of the tenants seemed anxious to go to work when farms were offered them yesterday."

He termed as a "publicity stunt" a telegram H. L. Mitchell, Memphis, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, sent to Representative O'Day, of New York, in which Mitchell said aid was needed to prevent "wholesale massacre of homeless men, women and children."

"There is no hint of trouble," the mayor said. "The colonists have flour, cows, pigs and everything they need."

Earlier in the week, Governor Futrell had described the situation as "much ado about very little."

Mayor Melhorn expressed belief that Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt had asked Governor Futrell to make his personal investigation at Parkin, but the Governor said later in the day that he had not heard from Mrs. Roosevelt, and that the investigation "was made solely on my own initiative."

Mr. Eddy and Dr. Amberson expressed a desire to get as many of the negro farmers back on plantations as soon as possible.

# *Evicted Sharecroppers Win Lifting of Blacklist*

## 108 Negroes Stand Firm on Demand for Union Conditions—Mayor Orders Leader of the Tent Local to Leave the City

By Rex Pitkin
(Special to the Daily Worker)

PARKIN, Ark., Mar. 5.—Planters of Eastern Arkansas can't stand the glaring white heat of the spotlight. Mass pressure in every section of the country plus national publicity has resulted in the lifting of the blacklist against the 108 Negro sharecroppers who were evicted from their shacks because of membership in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

But the feudal landlords discovered to their dismay that the homeless sharecroppers—who for six weeks have lived in tents at the edge of town—refuse to go back to work unless union conditions are met.

Daily Worker 3-6-36

Planters in this vicinity have expressed the desire to return the evicted croppers to the plantations as soon as possible. Mayor H. H. Melhorn of Parker announced that the landowners have offered to put all of the evicted farmers back on the land but H. L. Mitchell, union secretary, declared that the union would discuss sharecropping contracts only with those planters who had settled fully with union members for last year's crop. Mitchell said that members would not sign individual contracts but would negotiate with the land owners only through a union committee.

### Leader Ordered Out

When the croppers in the tent colony refused to dribble back to work family by family Mayor Melhorn ordered the Negroes to disperse. He especially ordered Bennie Fleming, secretary of the tent local, to be gone in forty-eight hours. The ultimatum was issued for the mayor by Sheriff C. M. Stacy who was accompanied to the tents by a large group of deputies and fifteen planters.

The lifting of the blacklist which had been in effect from the first day that the croppers were driven onto the highways followed a visit to the colony by Gov. J. M. Futrell who in a statement afterwards issued an insulting attack on the Negroes.

Mayor Melhorn revealed that Futrell's visit was occasioned by a request of Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt for an investigation. The governor denied that his hand was forced. He said he "had not received any such communication from Mrs. Roosevelt. My investigation was made solely on my own initiative."

That the strength of the union has forced the planters to deal with the croppers is proven by the fact that Mayor Melhorn's aid that the landowners will now put the evicted tenants back to work regardless of their affiliation with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. But only a day before Gov. Futrell declared that the planters would not hire union members. Among the planters who are willing to employ the croppers evicted from the Dibble plantation are A. L. Lancaster and H. M. Rodgers.

### Union Ready to Negotiate

Mitchell pointed out that "our people are ready to deal with any plantation owner in Northeast Arkansas and discuss on neutral grounds contracts for 1936. But Aubrey Lancaster, who offered ten of our people jobs, has refused to settle with all union members of his plantation. He offered our men a very unfair contract, proposing they pay half the rent and then give them only half the crop proceeds.

"H. M. Rodgers also has refused to settle with his labor for 1936. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union stands ready to have a committee meet with any plantation owner and draw up a fair contract at any time he wishes to engage in collective bargaining. We would not hold a conference with any of them who has evicted union men without just settlement of their wages."

It has been the rule for planters to evict their croppers in the early weeks of the new year in order to avoid settling accounts with the tenant families who have completed eight or nine months of back-breaking toil in the cotton fields. The union is now insisting that landlords quit this practice and sign contracts with the union, thus in some measure preventing wholesale evictions and robbery of Negro and white sharecroppers.

# Tenant and Landlord

BY GEORGE MORRIS

Word is sent out from Communist headquarters in New York that there is to be a strike of tenant farmers in three principal cotton growing counties in Arkansas about the middle of July. Someone who knows about cotton farming has hit upon the psychological time for the strike. By the middle of July the weather will be hot, the workers weary, the end of the season for cultivating will be drawing near and cotton choppers will be in the midst of a race to prevent the rank growing grass and weeds from overwhelming the tender cotton plants and saving the crop from failure. The tenant will be obligated to the plantation operator for several hundred dollars advanced for cultivating the crop, the furnishing season will be about over, and the tenant will know that within a few weeks he will be obliged to go on his own until he begins to gather the crop. The tenant will have a fairly accurate idea of what his share of the crop will amount to by December, and if, by his own system of rapid calculation, he decides that his part, after five months more work, will be only a little more than he owes at present, he should be a shining mark for the Communist agitator.

Tenants, as a rule, have no respect for debt. If by some misfortune, such as drouth, flood, boll weevil, army worm, grasshopper, or other pests, the tenant's share of the crop should not be sufficient to discharge his obligations to the planter, who suffers exactly in proportion to the tenant, the planter knows from long experience that it is futile to attempt to carry the deficit over with expectation of collecting it the following year. Rather than start the year in debt, the tenant moves to another plantation and starts the year with a clean slate. However, among the majority of planters there exists a sort of free-masonry which makes it unethical for a planter to take a tenant from another plantation without first settling the tenant's obligations with his landlord. The mere fact of not having some cash coming to him, to say nothing of ending the year in debt, makes a discontented tenant. He is ready to move and try his luck elsewhere. Thus many tenants are constantly shifting from one plantation to another as planters settle with each other on a basis of what the tenant owes.

What the planter pays to settle the tenant's obligation, which may be from $50 to $100, is not charged to the tenant. That is the planter's initial investment in his tenant. Another $15 or $20 is spent for trucking the tenant's effects to his new home. That, also, is at the expense of the landlord. There is also a fraternity among tenants. Those who have a profit from their crop and have no reason for discontent, call upon the planters for "Christmas money," in varying amounts. It is a form of blackmail. The custom has become so universal that planters realize that to refuse the demand is to incur the risk of losing their tenants. Few planters are in a position to refuse to come across.

From that time on the planter provides work, for which the tenant is paid in cash, or the tenant is given a limited amount of credit, guaranteed by the planter, if at a store operated by someone else, or assumed by the planter if he operates a store of his own. The amount of credit increases as the season advances, amounting to a considerable sum when it is realized that the average tenant represents a family of five. When the plowing season begins the tenant is given a mule valued at $150. The average life of a mule in the hands of a tenant is not more than five years, so there is a depreciation of $30 a year, which the farmer may write off on his own account. Should the tenant keep the mule at his own home, he will work the mule by day and ride it by night, and make the depreciation considerably higher. Should the tenant have a hog and a few chickens, he will feed them the corn furnished by the landlord for the mule, and let the mule starve. Planters have found it more practical to house the work stock at a central barn and employ someone to supervise feeding.

With the beginning of each season the planter is usually required to provide the tenant with an entirely new farming outfit. He must buy plows of different varieties, singletrees, trace chains, backbands, hames, collars and bridles. These articles, which the small farm owner uses year after year, patches and repairs and keeps in order and protected by shelter, rarely suffice for more than one season of tenant use. They cost him nothing, so there is no reason why he should take care of them. The tenant, of course, has his house to live in free, a team and wagon with which to haul firewood, a well and a rope and bucket, with the bucket constantly falling in the well for the landlord to extricate. Besides ordinary medical attention, there are occasional services of the surgeon called in to treat gunshot wounds or more familiar lacerations made by a sharp and dextrously wielded razor. The landlord, of course, provides the seeds for one and sometimes two or three plantings. If his operations are sufficiently extensive, a superintendent must be employed to oversee operations. Some well-meaning individuals have assumed that tenants are tenants because of peonage. As a matter of fact, most tenants are tenants because they are shiftless. The average tenant always has business in town and is constantly under the necessity of seeing a man about a dog, or something. He is never at a loss for an excuse for being some place other than in the field, and he would rather fish than work. At the end of the year, with nothing invested except his labor, and the landlord having provided the land, work stock, implements and generous credit, the tenant gets half of all he produced.

This is a sketchy description of the carefree tenant and the tribulations of the landlord, against whom the New York Communists propose to call a strike in July. If the tenant is tired in July, and weary, as is his chronic condition, the nerves of the landlord are getting somewhat threadbare about that time also. If the Communists come to Arkansas to solve the tenant problem, we venture to predict that the planters will go far toward solving the Communist problem.

# CHOPPERS ON STRIKE IN ARKANSAS FIELDS

## Three Counties Called Out But Officers Say No Effect Yet Felt

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 18.—(AP)—Cotton choppers in the east Arkansas sharecropper country were called out on a strike today in three counties and in Memphis five sympathizers were arrested for allegedly attempting to prevent laborers from crossing the Harahan bridge into Arkansas.

Planters and officers in the affected area—Crittenden, Cross and St. Francis counties—claimed that the strike was not effective, and that the men were at work in the fields as usual.

Sheriff Howard Curlin, of Crittenden county, charged that threats had been used against some laborers by organizers for the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, called the strike.

"We are in touch with the situation," Curlin said, "and will be prepared to deal with those who attempt to force men to quit work by threat of physical violence."

James M. Curtis, 56, and four other members of the Memphis Workers' Alliance, an unemployed organization, were charged with disorderly conduct and vagrancy. Mitchell said they were patrolling the Memphis end of the bridge to persuade laborers from entering Arkansas to replace strikers.

The union sought a chancery court injunction to prohibit Memphis police from interfering with the picket. The application will be heard tomorrow.

"We would rather starve in Memphis than in Arkansas," and "Our children cry for bread—don't take our jobs," read placards carried by the five.

Mitchell said the strikers are asking $1.50 for a 10-hour day for labor and $2.50 for tractor drivers. He said they are receiving from 75 cents to $1 for labor and $2 for tractor driving.

Two thousand regular day laborers and 4,000 cotton choppers are concerned, Mitchell said. Sharecropper members of the union are not involved.

Officers in all counties denied there was a labor shortage.

The center of strike activity was reported in the neighborhood of Earle, Ark., by union organizers.

E. I. McKinley Sr., Arkansas labor commissioner, said he would investigate the extent of the strike.

# Cotton Choppers In Arkansas Striking

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 18.—(AP)—Cotton choppers in the east Arkansas sharecropper country were called out on a strike today in three counties, and in Memphis, five sympathizers were arrested for allegedly attempting to prevent laborers from crossing the Harahan bridge into Arkansas.

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# Cotton Field Strike Described As Talk

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 23.—(AP)—East Arkansas planters and County officers were in agreement tonight that the strike among cotton choppers "is more talk than anything else."

Most of the planters interviewed said they found little evidence of dissatisfaction among their laborers, and peace officers in St. Francis, Crittenden and Cross—the affected counties—said their own knowledge of a strike resulted from what they described as attempts by strike leaders to threaten workers into leaving plantations.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, however, declared that "the strike is spreading in the three counties, and more than 3,000 laborers are participating in the walkout."

He said his charges that "a reign of terror" exists, that strikers are being illegally arrested, and that peonage laws are being violated would be laid before Fred A. Isrig, U. S. district attorney at Little Rock.

Mr. Isrig has said that a "complete investigation" will be made any time evidence of Federal violations in the strike area are presented to him.

"We expect to present our charges to Mr. Isrig soon," Mitchell said, "and very soon."

# Gov. Futrell Rebukes Woman For Criticism

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., May 28.—(AP)—Criticism by a New York woman of the "inhuman treatment" of eastern Arkansas sharecroppers brought a reply today from Gov. J. M. Futrell that "there is not one-half as much brutality and mistreatment or neglect of the poor in Arkansas as there is in New York City alone."

"The trouble with you is that you don't know what you are talking about," the Governor wrote Mrs. Lettie W. Witherspoon, of New York City (449 West 124th Street) in answering a letter from her.

"You are misinformed as to conditions. You had better clean up at home before you criticize some other state."

# 'Victory' In Cotton Strike Discounted

MEMPHIS, TENN., May 29. — (AP) — Claims of leaders of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union of a partial "victory" in the East Arkansas cotton choppers' strike were sharply disputed this afternoon by planters, officers and agricultural authorities.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the union, issued a statement that farmers in Mississippi County, Arkansas, had raised the pay for cotton choppers from 75 cents to $1 and $1.25 a day, and that a number of planters in Crittenden County had signed union contracts, but "asked that their names be withheld." Planters expressed "amazement" when informed.

"The 'real center' of the so-called east Arkansas strike," said Sheriff Howard Curlin, of Crittenden County, "is in the offices of the agitators at Memphis. It is there they grind out statements about activities that never take place. We haven't had any strike here. The farms look fine, and no one is behind in his cotton chopping. Mitchell likes to issue statements in order to interest Easterners in an effort to get contributions. It is a racket."

Mississippi County was not among the three counties in which the strike was called last week. Crittenden, Cross and St. Francis were supposedly affected.

Arkansas.

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# DEFENSE SCREAMS 'COMMUNISTS' IN 'CROPPER CASE CONVICTION

JONESBORO, Ark., Dec. 4.—The court session began at 9:30 this morning, with the government's final summary of the case presented by Gordon Dean, special assistant to the United States attorney-general.

Next Wheeler presented the defense arguments for Peacher. Lamb, closing the argument in Peacher's behalf, startled the courtroom when he charged that the Southern Tenant Farmers Union with responsibility for the charges against Peacher and said that "no eight Negroes on the face of this earth ever went on the witness stand told precisely the same story, as these have done without being coached. I do not accuse the government investigators of having done that, but I can say what all of us know and what all of you answered about political parties when you qualified as jurors.

"I thought this case might go over without trial when the election was past. The Tenants Union sent telegram after telegram to the governor and the president before election, and somebody had to make an investigation. This one followed, and these charges were made.

"Those fellows that are running the Tenants Union from Memphis are mostly Communist, possibly Anarchists, and they are back of the whole situation. It makes no difference what you do or how far you go, you will never in this world have a Tenants Union that will conduct or run or substantially influence the agriculture of this country. Tenants fared better than landlords for the past several years. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

"The law doesn't make Negroes, the law doesn't make riff-raff, the law doesn't make landowners, the law doesn't make homeowners, the law doesn't make tenants, the law does make good citizens," he continued.

"Nature does that. People are born in different strata of life, some have pride, self-respect, energy, zeal, thrift, ambition, determination to win and become something and somebody, be representative citizens, home owners, substantial citizens.

"Many substantial people began as tenants. Some are as thrifty as any citizens we have.

"You and other substantial citizens have reached your present status in life by effort. The ancestors of these Negroes were cannibals. It has been said that they would eat anything but a lawyer or a missionary. I wonder if they wouldn't also balk at a government investigator.

"The government says that there is no corroboration of Peacher's charge that these Negroes are vagrants. Earle was full of loafers. Why on clean up and clean out the town? Loafers, leeches, and gamblers have no right to lie around there.

"How did you become home owners? Not by loafing. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

**Pleads for Fairness**

United States District Attorney Isgig closed the government's argument with an impassioned denunciation of Peacher's abuse of his office as town marshal and of the injustice of the Negroes' position.

The homes of these men, from which they were taken when charged by Peacher with being loafers and vagrants, are the places where all men may rightfully expect to be safe in a well-ordered society," he declared. "I know Negroes. I came up in a cotton field with them, and I have worked with them and I have employed them for a period of years. These men were not lying, and there is no evidence that they are low or vicious. There can be no more pathetic spectacle than these humble Negroes who lived in terror of this brutal and domineering man, and who knew that they had to take whatever mock justice he might mete out to them.

"I have watched Peacher's demeanor in this courtoom, and so have you. You know and I know that no Negro in that community dared talk back to him, and that they were defenseless at that mock trial. It is a blot on the fair name of eastern Arkansas and of this beloved state where I was born and which I proudly claim as my own throughout this mortal existence, that such conditions should be allowed to exist.

"You have heard Peacher's attorneys drag in the wholly irrevelent issue of farm tenancy, which has nothing to do with this case. That has been done to divert your attention from the colossal guilt of this man, to remind you the old doctrine that 'Negroes arn't anybody, anyhow.' Appeals have been made to prejudice, to class feeling, to racial distinction. If juries like this one disregard their solemn oaths to settle cases on the law and the testimony, then America is doomed as a free land."

**Good Effect, Predicted**

Brien McMahon, assistant attorney general in charge of the Criminal Division, was sent here to direct presentation of the government's case. Associated with him in addition to Isgrig and Dean was Richard P. Shanahan, special assistant to the attorney-general. Dean and Shanahan made the investigation which resulted in presentation of charges to the Grand Jury and in Peacher's indictment.

McMahon said tonight:

"I feel that the conviction will have a most salutary effect upon men who attempt to use the processes of law to perpetuate a practice which was supposed to have been done away with in this country nearly a century ago."

Record 12-5-36 Jonesboro, Ark.

# 'SLAVERY' VERDICT WON BY 'G' MEN

Times 11-28-36 New York, N.Y.

## Department of Justice Aided Conviction of City Marshal in Arkansas Case.

## GOT WORKERS BY ARREST

By A. W. PARKE

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Nov. 27.—Conviction yesterday of Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earl, on a charge of slavery arose out of an investigation made by "G" men from Washington who spent some weeks in Arkansas after farm tenancy disturbances in Crittenden County last Spring. Evidence was presented that Peacher, claiming a contract to clear school district lands, accosted Negroes on the streets of Earl and arrested eight for vagrancy. These men he arraigned in the court of Mayor T. S. Mitchell, who convicted them and imposed jail sentences. Peacher, alleging a verbal contract with the county judge through the county Sheriff for using city prisoners, took the Negroes to a stockade he had erected on school property, working them until they were ordered liberated by Governor J. M. Futrell. Peacher was indicted upon this testimony.

At the trial in the Eastern Division Federal Court at Jonesboro it developed that Peacher paid the county nothing for the prisoners' work, and the court records failed to disclose any contract. It was also proved that the Negroes were not vagrants but that some owned their own homes.

**Judge Forced Verdict**

In spite of this the jury hesitated to convict. After an hour and a half it reported to Judge John E. Martineau that it was unable to reach a verdict.

Exasperated, Judge Martineau virtually directed a verdict of guilty and told the jury it should not be influenced by the fact that a white man was on one side and Negroes on the other. Within a few minutes the jury returned a verdict of guilty, but with a plea that Peacher be not given a jail sentence. Judge Martineau, however, sentenced him to a fine of $3,500 and two years in prison, with the qualification of probation instead of prison if the fine was paid.

Southern States have for many years leased prisoners to farmers and contractors upon the payment of their fines to the city or county, and in Arkansas by one county to another, where a county conducts a penal farm. Peacher's offense was the first prosecution under a law passed in 1866. Crittenden County has been the hotbed of farm tenancy disturbances and there officers of the Farm Tenant Union from Memphis claim they were flogged by plantation owners. A suit for $100,000 against prominent East Arkansas men filed by these alleged victims was scheduled for trial at this term of court in Jonesboro, but was continued due to costs for service not having been paid by the plaintiffs. District Attorney Fred I. Isgrig only recently demanded of the Department of Justice that solicitors for a fund to prosecute Peacher, operating from New York, be prosecuted by the government. Isgrig, himself a plantation owner, was assisted in prosecuting Peacher by special representatives of the Department of Justice and insists that if there are other violations of the Slavery Act in Arkansas he will prosecute them if evidence is unearthed by the Federal agents.

**President Ordered Inquiry**

The Farm Union disturbances flared often in the Jonesboro trial, the defense insisting that Northern union agitators had made such a furor over alleged conditions prior to the national election that President Roosevelt was forced to direct an investigation by the Department of Justice which was naturally expected to dissipate after the election. District Attorney Isgrig insists that the planters subscribed a large fund for the defense of Peacher, who was active in their interests during the tenancy controversy.

Peacher has served six years as city marshal at Earl and is also

a commissioned deputy under the Sheriff of the county. His attorneys intimate that if he can raise the money to pay the fine an appeal may not be taken. Peacher insists that he will continue in office, but Judge Martineau rules that even should the fine be paid he will be under probation and during the two-year period will not be permitted to serve as a peace officer.

# WALLACE WILL SPEED FARM TENANCY PLAN

Commercial Appeal 11-18-36 Memphis, Tenn.

## Secretary Tells Farmers of Crop Control

## SPEAKS AT LITTLE ROCK

### Comes to Memphis From Bureau Meeting to Inspect Forest—Awaits Appointment to National Commission

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Nov. 17.—Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace said today he was "ready to tackle the job" when advised of his appointment by President Roosevelt to head a National Farm Tenancy Commission.

Here to address the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation, Wallace said he had received no formal notification of the appointment but that "we'll get right into the matter."

Wallace left tonight for Memphis to inspect the Shelby forest project tomorrow and view the Rust Mechanical Cotton Picker. Accompanied by Rexford G. Tugwell, Resettlement administrator, he will spend the remainder of the week inspecting projects in Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi.

He told the Farm Bureau that "extraordinary interest has been expressed by farmers recently in crop production control, especially since the election."

**Plans Indefinite**

"I can't tell you precisely what our plans are for next year," Wallace stated, "because the demands haven't come in fully from the farmers. We want to see the power turned over to you to handle your farm problems as you want them handled."

The secretary told the farmers that they would have to organize more closely if "you are able to get federal powers to place you on an equal footing with industrial corporations."

He warned of the "peril of 40-cent cotton," commenting:

"When you have 40-cent cotton, that means five-cent cotton a few years later. No one group can prosper for long at the expense of another group."

He asserted that farmers today were working together to obtain better prices and conditions as never before.

"There are those who would separate the farmers of the north and south," he said. "I was most happy in the last campaign to know that hundreds of Arkansas farmers got in their automobiles and took to the farmers of Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and other states the message of what they believed new agricultural policies were doing for them."

He said it was easy for the individual farmer to feel "well, I can go it alone," but said "recent years have proved we cannot go it alone."

**Worked Alone for Years**

"We farmers did go it alone for years and years," he added, "and would still be able to if it were not for the corporations."

Discussing crop control, Wallace said:

"In my opinion, the most courageous thing the farmer ever did was back in August, 1933, when the farmers of the south plowed under 10,000,000 acres of cotton. It was the necessary thing to do to bring back balance."

"We recently called farmers to Washington to get their views on whether they favored crop insurance," Wallace said. "They said 'yes, we are interested in favor of crop insurance but talk about crop control.'"

Asked if he cared to comment on the work done by the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission, Wallace said he was not sufficiently familiar with the board's program to make a statement at this time.

Federal Prosecutor Fred A. Isgrig said in an address before the federation that the future economic progress of the nation depended upon intelligent crop control.

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### Wallace Will Head National Tenancy Group

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17.—(AP)—Before leaving the capital today for South America, President Roosevelt set up machinery to prepare for the next session of Congress a broad program for converting farm tenants into land owners.

Characterizing the farm tenant problem as "a challenge to national action," he named a committee of 38 men and women headed by Secretary Wallace to meet it in a "thoroughly constructive manner."

The committee was charged with devising "a long term program of action to alleviate the shortcomings of our farm tenancy system."

Mr. Roosevelt, in a letter to Wallace, asked the group to "report to me not later than Feb. 1."

Dr. L. C. Gray, veteran federal expert on land use who is a deputy administrator under Tugwell, was name "executive secretary and technical director for this special committee" by the president.

Tugwell, who has been in the forefront with farm tenancy proposals and discussions recently, was appointed on the committee, as was W. W. Alexander, another deputy Resettlement administrator.

A. G. Black, former corn-hog chief for the AAA and now head of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics; M. L. Wilson, and numerous farm spokesmen also were named.

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### Futrell Gratified With Roosevelt Act

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Nov. 17.—Governor Futrell expressed gratification today at the appointment by President Roosevelt of a national committee to study farm tenancy.

The governor created the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission for a similar purpose several months ago.

"I am glad to see the president take this action," Futrell said. "The problem is one best attacked from a national standpoint with the states co-operating in bringing about its solution.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1936
Labor Conditions.

# Wanted—Pickers To Gather 1936 Cotton Crop

Usually at 7 o'clock in the morning during the cotton picking season, Virginia Avenue at the Harahan Bridge is deserted and truckloads of pickers are rumbling over the span towards Eastern Arkansas cotton fields. There's a shortage of pickers this season, however, and trucks waited for laborers long after the usual hour of departure yesterday.

—Staff Photo by Elliott

Commercial Appeal 9-10-36 Memphis, Tenn.

## WPA WILL CARRY ON; BERRY REFUSES PLEA FOR COTTON PICKERS

### Officials Decide Against Move To Send Memphis Workers Into Fields

### FEW FITTED FOR HARVEST

### Arkansas Told To Supply Men From Own Rolls

### SOME RELEASED FOR JOB

### Washington Ruling Backs Up Local Action—Need Not Accept Farm Labor If Unqualified, Federal Decision

BY PAUL COPPOCK

Suggestions that the Memphis WPA program be closed down to provide cotton pickers were rejected yesterday by city officials, the Memphis Chamber of Commerce, Washington WPA officials and Col. Harry S. Berry, state WPA administrator.

Colonel Berry called on Arkansas to send its 29,000 WPA workers to the cotton fields before asking for help from Tennessee.

Corrington Gill, acting administrator of WPA, announced in Washington that the WPA will not be "a party to arbitrarily forcing workers to accept sub-standard wages."

**Fear Hardship**

Closing down WPA in Memphis would bring hardship to thousands without solving the problem of cotton planters, it was decided in a conference in the mayor's office among Mayor Overton, E. C. Klaiber, president of the Chamber of Commerce; Cliff Penland, executive vice president of the C. of C.; S. Tate Pease, WPA administrator for West Tennessee; W. B. Fowler, city public works co-ordinator; Cliff Davis, vice-mayor, and Ralph Picard, city commissioner.

Mayor Overton sent the following telegram to Washington,

"Honorable Thad Holt,
"Assistant Administrator,
"Works Progress Administration,
"Washington, D. C.

"In regard to recent report in connection with need of cotton pickers, city authorities and local WPA officials are urging all qualified persons on WPA pay rolls to take positions. Local relief authorities have already taken 300 from relief rolls because able to pick cotton. It must be borne in mind, however, that there are thousands of industrial employes, clerks, office workers and city laborers who have had no experience in picking cotton and could not earn a living at this work, which is paid according to quantity picked. We cannot expect these people to leave their homes and families to go to the country for a few weeks' work at which they have no experience and could not earn enough to support their families.

"WPA rolls in Memphis have been carefully watched and every effort has been used to keep people off WPA pay rolls when and as employment is available in private industry and we are confident the number on relief pay rolls will compare favorably with any city of this size in the country. Will be glad to furnish any additional information necessary.

"WATKINS OVERTON, Mayor."

**Klaiber Also Wires**

Another telegram went to Mr. Holt from Mr. Klaiber. It read:

"The agricultural committee of the Memphis Chamber of Commerce at meeting yesterday decided to confer with city officials as to advisability of relieving WPA workers for cotton picking. After thorough investigation we are convinced that the thousands of workers on present WPA projects are usefully employed and curtailment of this work would be serious mistake. We are convinced that the WPA has removed from its rolls every qualified person for work in cotton fields. Thousands of skilled laborers, clerks, etc., on WPA program not equipped for work in fields and could not support themselves and families. We are convinced that any curtailment of present WPA program would be serious mistake as outlined above."

Colonel Berry expressed his views of the situation in Nashville, saying:

"The suggestion of one of the committees of the Memphis Chamber of Commerce that WPA projects be closed down and Tennessee relief workers be sent to Arkansas cotton fields, appears to be ill considered.

"To get down to a concrete fact, a prominent Arkansas planter asked for 75 cotton pickers from Memphis to pick cotton on his plantation 35 miles west of that city, and proposed to pay them $1 per hundred pounds. The relief clients at work on projects in the city of Memphis are not rural people, and they probably could not pick over 60 to 70 pounds per day in a day of 10 hours, and would therefore receive not more than 7½ cents per hour for their labor, and in addition they would be required to travel 70 miles a day to and from their work. These jobs would not provide a subsistence wage and the proposal is thoroughly impractical as only local labor experienced in cotton growing and residing in the vicinity of the cotton field could not earn a living wage at this rate.

"The necessity of sending Tennessee relief workers to Arkansas is not made clear, when Arkansas has employed on WPA projects more than 29,000 workers who could be taken from their jobs and sent to cotton fields in the vicinity of their homes.

**Available For Work**

"There are registered, but unassigned in West Tennessee 6,700 relief clients for whom work has not been found, and these are all available for work in the locality in which they reside.

"I am advised by the WPA director for West Tennessee that he has not had a single call for labor from any one of the 21 counties in the West Tennessee district.

"The WPA in Tennessee will exercise every vigilance to protect Tennessee agriculture, and in anticipation of any emergency of this character, instructions were issued several months ago as follows:

"'It is incumbent upon all district directors and their subordinates to encourage WPA clients to accept private employment, even though temporary. When a WPA client has an offer of temporary employment in private industry, he should apply to his immediate foreman or supervisor for a leave of absence, and he should be informed that the acceptance of such employment will not jeopardize his status as a WPA client and that upon the termination of his private employment he may return to work as a WPA client.'

"There is no shortage of labor in the cotton districts of Tennessee, and consequently Tennessee has no labor problem at the present time. Any shortage of labor that might exist in Arkansas, when Arkansas has ample quota of relief clients of its own, is not a Tennessee problem. Certainly the suggestion of closing down the WPA projects in the city of Memphis for the purpose of supplying Arkansas with labor, is an ill advised answer to Arkansas' cotton picking problem, at least, until the 29,000 WPA workers in Arkansas have first been sent to the cotton fields."

In certain localities, Arkansas WPA workers are being released to pick cotton, H. C. Baker, assistant administrator for Arkansas, said last night. This will not interfere with their seniority on work projects, he said.

"We have released a few workers," he said, "where farmers have shown us the demand, and where it does not interfere with the progress of the work we have under way. However, there has been no major movement in this direction. Of course, when we have released the men for such tasks we are not guaranteeing their return to WPA rolls. Conditions may change. Money may be withdrawn from the projects. It is as far as possible a co-operative movement with the farmers to gather their crops."

Baker said Floyd Sharp, WPA administrator, is out of the state but is familiar with and has approved the work.

**Washington Rules**

The WPA ruling from Washington is that the needy must accept available private jobs but they need not do so "unless they are qualified to do the work and when such work is at a standard or going rate of wages," Mr. Gill said.

"This applies to agricultural employment such as cotton picking and when it is definitely shown that there is a shortage of labor for such employment in a community, the need for WPA employment in that community necessarily lessens and therefore the reason for operating WPA projects ceases.

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"It has always been the policy of

the WPA to give workers reasonable opportunity to accept temporary employment because this often results in permanent work. We have also given them definite assurance that WPA work will be open to them upon completion of such.

"However, a worker is not expected to accept private employment unless it is a full time job, paying standard or going rates of wages or when such work could be conflicting with established union relationships."

Wayne Alliston, Mississippi WPA administrator, announced early yesterday that projects in the Mississippi Delta were being suspended to relieve the cotton pickers shortage. Later in the day, officials in Washington said that Mr. Alliston had not been authorized to drop workers not suited to such work.

### 6,783 Await Jobs

Following the city call conference, Mr. Pease said that aside from the 4,824 persons now on the WPA rolls, there are 6,783 waiting for WPA assignments. Those waiting for assignment will be of little help to the cotton planters, however, for they include 3,000 women, aside from white-collar men, and the partially disabled.

The plea for cotton pickers from the relief rolls is an annual fall occurrence in Memphis, but it was a new situation to C. E. Love, West Tennessee supervisor of the Tennessee Employment Service, who inquired into it yesterday. He was particularly impressed by the reported offers of $1 to $1.25 per 100 pounds.

"The requests we have for pickers offer 40 to 75 cents per 100 pounds," Mr. Love said. "There are not many requests for pickers, but some applicants for work are accepting the offers at these rates n Mississippi and Arkansas.

"We have no requests from the men named in The Commercial Appeal (members of the Chamber of Commerce agricultural committee), but we are seeking informations for the benefit of both the men who need work and the men who need cotton pickers. We have distributed bulletins throughout relief offices that cotton picking work is available at this office."

The Memphis Employment Center is at 148-50 Court.

The Memphis office of the Tennessee Welfare Commission, foresaw the cotton picking situation in early August. Miss Mildred Stoves, Memphis director, reported to the Memphis Welfare Commission recently that there are 1,717 on the local direct rolls, of whom only 200 are physically fit, and that most of the 200 are white-collar workers.

More than 300 families on relief, whose records showed cotton experience, were dropped from relief weeks ago and no able-bodied workers have been added since, she reported.

The WPA pay, which planters say is depriving them of labor, varies from $35 to $74.80 a month for 128 hours of work.

# FUTRELL TENANCY STUDY WILL OPEN

## 57-Member Commission Meets Today To Map Out Program

HOT SPRINGS, ARK., Sept. 20.—(AP)—Gov. J. M. Futrell expressed confidence tonight that his farm tenancy commission would formulate definite recommendations for solution of the South's 70-year-old sharecropping problem.

He will address the honorary 57-member group tomorrow when it convenes its initial session to work out a program designed to improve the lot of Southern tenants. The conference is the forerunner of Futrell's proposed Dixie-wide parley on the subject.

"The main idea to be gained," said the Arkansas chief executive, "is substitution of farm tenants with farm owners. The policy of this country should be to encourage and stimulate the owning of homes."

He suggested when he called the meeting of the State body that the best solution to the tenant problem appeared to be a Federal-State cooperative program opening the door of farm ownership to agricultural workers now working on a share basis.

C. E. Palmer, South Arkansas publisher, is chairman of the commission. He said he hoped the group could form plans to give the tenant "greater opportunities in life, an incentive to improve the soil, improve his home and arouse in him the hope to become a home owner.

The commission will examine a 15-point program. Results of 11 years' research into the South's plantation system will be submitted by Dr. C. O. Brannen, head of the University of Arkansas Department of Rural Economics and Sociology.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union sounded the only discordant note to Futrell's sharecropper uplift movement. H. L. Mitchell, union secretary, charged the governor's appointment of the commission was a "political gesture."

President J. R. Butler of the union said he would seek to read a statement before the commission asking it to "face facts" in its study of the problem. The statement charged terrorism in the eastern Arkansas cotton fields wheer sharecropping has been practiced since the sixties.

A Federal Grand Jury in Little Rock tentatively set next Wednesday for consideration of charges that peonage exists in the eastern counties of the State. Two Departments of Justice attorneys and a dozen other persons are expected to testify.

# SOLUTION OF TENANCY SEEN ONLY IN ITS END

## Federally Financed Ownership by Croppers Urged in Arkansas.

HOT SPRINGS, Ark., Sept. 21.—(AP)—Governor J. M. Futrell's tenancy commission received proposals today for a federally financed farm ownership program and unionization of field laborers as methods of solving the south's sharecropper problem.

The Arkansas chief executive said the United States should make it possible and practicable for an industrious and thrifty farmer to purchase and pay for a small farm of highly productive land.

The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union renewed charges of terrorism against the union in eastern Arkansas and described organization as the best method of improving the status of tenants.

Complete annihilation of tenancy is a dream, said Futrell in declaring worthless people cannot be helped. He asserted the ultimate goal is a substitution of farm owners for farm tenants as far as possible.

### Cheaper Than Soldiers.

"A home owning, home loving people," he continued, "will give our country more real protection against foreign invasion and conquest than the expenditure of millions on our armies and navies."

As the Governor spoke, a federal grand jury organized at Little Rock, prepared to take up Wednesday charges that peonage exists in eastern Arkansas cotton fields. Federal investigators and 11 witnesses will appear.

The union statement was distributed prior to the initial session of the commission at which C. E. Palmer, Texarkana publisher, and Charles Goslee, Hot Springs editor, were elected permanent chairman and secretary, respectively.

Palmer said he hoped the group would evolve a program "to appeal to enough states to make possible concerted action by the states and by the federal government," and named a special committee to consider the union statement.

The union proposed abolition of commissaries at plantations, enforcement of Arkansas' 8 per cent legal interest rate and replacement of the poll tax law with a simple registration rule.

The commission received from the University of Arkansas the results of 16 years of research in farm tenancy, declaring the only method of attack is to bring about less tenancy and more ownership.

### Credit Proposal.

Success will depend primarily upon a system of financing land purchase which can be utilized by the tenants, said Dr. C. O. Brannen, head of the university's department of rural economics and sociology.

Credit must be provided, he said, with low initial payments, low interest rates and a long period for amortization possibly through a new government corporation, he said. The Bankhead tenant bill introduced at the last session of congress was described as a step in this direction.

Dr. Branner reported 2,965,134 tenants in the United States, 151,759 of them in Arkansas. The highest rate of tenancy occurs in the south, he said, with the highest percentage in 1935 set at 70 per cent in Mississippi.

### WPA Aide Pledges Aid.

Colonel Lawrence Westbrook, chairman of the Works Progress Administration advisory board, indorsed the proposed work of the commission and pledged the co-operation of administrative agencies in Washington.

Westbrook said: "The most helpful feature of the sharecropper problem is the fact that responsible leaders of thought and action in the south have recognized it as a problem.

"I am glad to see this cotton economy go to the devil if it does not provide more than it has provided for those dependent upon it."

He lauded Governor Hugh White, of Mississippi, for recent legislative action to promote industries with city and county bond issues.

"It may be that this action by the state of Mississippi will go down in history as one of the epoch-making events in this century.

"However, other things must be done to promote new industries. Decent housing must be provided for labor at a cost it can afford to pay. Freight tariffs must be studied and revised. Power costs must be adjusted and very important, labor must be trained.

### Industry a Solution.

"Today 25 per cent of all the industrial activity in America is centered in seven communities. They could all be put in one medium-sized Texas county. Such a concentration of wealth, power and population is wrong from every conceivable angle.

"Socially it means crowded, unsanitary living conditions obtainable only at great cost. Politically, it has fostered rampant sectionalism, promoted bossism and furnished a fertile field for sowing the seeds of anarchy and disorder. From a military standpoint, under conditions of modern war, such concentrations offer opportunities for destruction which an enormously superior defending force could not withstand.

"But most of the industries that the south would get if she really set out to get them, would not be old industries moving from other places. They would be new industries supplying new wants and creating immensely increased demands for old wants as wel as well as the new ones."

# U.S. LAWYERS WILL PROBE PEONAGE

## Federal Government Takes Hand; Will Seek Facts

## AWAITS RESULT

LITTLE ROCK, Ark.—(A N P)—Gordon Dean, special assistant to Attorney General Homer Cummings, and Richard P. Shanahan, special attorney of the Department of Justice, arrived here last Sunday to present to Federal Grand Jury evidence relating to farm labor conditions in the eastern section of the state, which have resulted in charges of peonage against planters and other officias.

Mr. Dean declined to outline their procedure before the Grand Jury session which opens September 21. Both attorneys expressed the belief that this is the first time the government has handled this type of case and it was believed they would confer with U. S. Attorney Fred A. Isgrig concerning the prosecution.

The decision to place the peonage charges before a Federal Grand Jury was announced a month ago by Attorney General Cummings. The alleged flogging of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis social worker, and Rev. Claude C. Williams, both white, near Earle, Arkansas, in June, is expected to be investigated in connection with the other charges.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# LABOR REPORT SHOWS SHARECROPPERS AIDED

Commercial Appeal

## State Bureau Settles Many Tenant Differences

1-1-36

LITTLE ROCK, Dec. 31.—(AP)—Labor Commissioner Ed I. McKinley said today that his department had made a greater effort during the last two years to assist sharecroppers in settlements with landlords than at any time in history.

The commissioner's report showed that more than 100 cases were handled and collections of $1,500 made. McKinley said misunderstanding of the government's assistance to cotton growers was responsible for the increased activity.

In an annual report for the calendar year 1935, the commissioner declared that labor troubles had been scarce in Arkansas.

"Few strikes have occurred during the last year," he said. "Two strikes in the lumber industry in the southern part of the state involved approximately 2,000 workers. One of these was settled by agreement, but the other was lost as far as demands of the workers were concerned.

"Both of these strikes were handled by representatives of the United States Department of Labor, although the state bureau gave assistance in attempting to bring about settlements.

"One strike in an eastern Arkansas mill was adjusted after 1,200 employes had been out on strike for four days. In another case, the bureau of labor was called on to prevent a strike in Nevada County where 70 employes had threatened to walk out. Adjustment of differences was made and no strike was called.

"Investigations in the sawmill industry of complaints that the law limiting the working hours to 10 hours a day was being violated resulted in two prosecutions. Correction was made in four other cases without prosecution.

# ARKANSAS FARMERS APPEAL FOR PROBE

Advertiser

## Tenant Union Sends Telegram To President; Charges New Evictions

1-19-36

Montgomery

MEMPHIS, TENN., Jan. 18.—(AP)—New threats of "war" in the East Arkansas sharecropper country were charged today by organizers of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union as they addressed an appeal to President Roosevelt for an investigation.

Asserting that a new "wave of evictions" of tenants threatens and that union members have been wounded and their meetings broken up, H. L. Mitchell, union secretary, asked the President to send a personal representative to investigate, or force a congressional inquiry into the situation.

"In behalf of defenseless white and negro sharecroppers who have been robbed of their wages, beaten, illegally jailed, and their families thrown on the highways to starve, and who have joined the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, a legal organization under the laws of Arkansas, for their protection, we appeal to you as President of the United States to enforce constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and the right peaceably to assemble," the telegram said.

Charges that two union negroes were shot down at Earle, Ark., as they left a union rally Thursday night, brought a statement from Denver L. Dudley, prosecuting attorney, that the negroes were brandishing guns and resisting arrest when wounded. A third union negro, Jim Ball, was jailed at Earle. Dudley said the negro had a shotgun and that if he had shot a deputy "who went up to the sharecroppers' meeting to question him, trouble would have followed."

Mitchell said a second meeting, held near Earle last night, was broken up by planters and their friends after Howard Kester, Nashville minister and sharecropper organizer, had been dragged from the meeting, called to protest Thursday night's incident.

Dudley said he was in Earle Friday, but heard nothing of any meetings being broken up.

# *Southern Tenant Farmers Call for Farmer-Labor Party*

**By Myra Page**
**(Special to the Daily Worker)**

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Jan. 8.—**A resolution favoring the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party was passed unanimously at the closing session of the Southern Tenants Farmers' Union, held in the Labor Temple here on Jan. 3-5. The resolution pointed out the desperate plight of the southern croppers and farm laborers, of Negro and "poor white" alike, and the complete failure of either the Republican or Democratic parties to come to their assistance. Taking note of the wide movement in trade union and labor circles toward the formation of a Labor Party, the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union with a membership of 25,000 in six southern states, resolved to support this movement for a genuine party of workers and farmers, which would work in their interests.**

The convention's closing session heard many moving speeches by union delegates, who told of their experiences in organizing and carrying on the struggle for a better life in the cotton fields of the South, and their deep conviction that in their Southern Tenant Farmers' Union they have a weapon that will enable them to win their demands.

Walter Moskop, a white cropper and one of the original organizers of the union, who served as chairman of the session, told how the first convention, in 1934, was held in a small hall with only a small group present, and that "all we had for lunch was fifteen cents of cheese and ten cents worth of crackers," to be divided up among the delegates. He contrasted this first convention with the present one, exhibiting the tremendous growth in the croppers' and cotton pickers organization.

H. L. Mitchell, also one of the union's first organizers, and its reelected secretary, gave a brief but effective closing address on "The Road Ahead." E. B. McKinney, first vice-president, formerly pastor of a Negro church in the cotton country who has worked and organized for the union and even risked his life many times in its behalf, issued a challenge to all the convention delegates to "stand by, don't give an inch, but build your organization unto the end."

John Allen of Missouri, L. I. Gallehon of Texas, Bob Reed of Arkansas, Howard Kestor, Southern Tenant Farmers' Union executive board member, and many others spoke, all predicting a further big growth in the union's strength in the year ahead.

The close solidarity of colored and white cotton pickers and croppers was evident throughout the convention of some eighty regular delegates and forty fraternal delegates closed with a "Ceremony of the Land," and a rousing echo of the union's favorite song:

"The Union is a-marching
"We Shall Not be moved!"

## What the South Needs

THE Southern Tenant Farmers' Union at its convention in Little Rock, Ark., unanimously went on record in favor of the formation of a Farmer-Labor Party. Other unions in the South, please copy. And not only adopt resolutions, but take the necessary action to form Farmer-Labor Parties in their own localities and states.

**Certainly there is no part of the country where a Farmer-Labor Party is needed more than in the South. Nowhere are civil liberties and elementary constitutional rights so flagrantly and persistently violated. Nowhere are living standards so low, nowhere is life so cheap when it happens to be the life of a Negro or white toiler.**

The Tampa outrage speaks for a Farmer-Labor Party, the murdered Gulf longshoremen and striking cotton pickers, the Scottsboro and Herndon cases speak for a Farmer-Labor Party.

All who want to prevent the South from becoming the breeding place of fascism, including those who still support Roosevelt nationally, should get to work at once to develop in their own communities anti-fascist Farmer-Labor Parties, based on the trade unions, farm and Negro organizations.

Daily Worker 1-10

# Reveal New Terrors In Arkansas Against Tenant Farmers Union

MEMPHIS, Tenn.—A new wave of terror has been launched against the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union by planters and officers of the law in Northeastern Arkansas. Scores of families are being evicted from their homes and thrown upon the highways. United meetings are being broken up by vigilantes, the members of the union beaten, flogged, shot, illegally arrested and jailed.

Howard Kester, Union organizer and secretary of the Central Defense Committee of the Union was dragged from a Methodist Church near Earle Arkansas, January 17 as he attempted to address a meeting of 450 white and Negro sharecroppers. The meeting was raided by an armed mob of planters, officers of the law and towns people. Kester, who was accompanied by H. I. Goldberger, attorney for the union, narrowly escaped lynching by the mob. Men, women and children were kicked and clubbed unmercifully. Ax handles, billies and saw handles were freely used by the mob upon the innocent people gathered to hear the speaking. All of the benches were overturned and wrecked and the windows smashed by the planters. Many of the union members were forced to jump from the windows of the church in order to escape being beaten.

Kester and Goldberger were escorted to the county line and told never to return on penalty of death. One of the members of the mob declared that the planters were "getting ready to stage another Elaine massacre if you don't quit disturbing our labor." Among those taking part in the raid were the following. "Boss" Dulaney, L. L. Barham, B. Lancaster, Otis Belford, Jerome Hood, Charlie Hood, Frank Hill and Ernest Richards, it is said.

### Two Shot In Back

On the night preceeding, another union meeting was broken up by deputies and two men shot, one seriously. The meeting was being held in a country church when Deputy Hood tried to arrest the guard at the door. After he had arrested the guard and started toward the jail, Deputies Hood and Peachers shot

2-1-36

two union men in the back. Following the shooting and the breaking up of the meeting by the planters feeling was running high between the planters and the oppressed sharecroppers.

H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Union, wired President Roosevelt that the people were looking to him to enforce constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and the right peaceably to assemble. Mitchell told the President that unless he acted to safeguard the rights of the people and to give them adequate protection that they would rise in the defense of their own rights.

More than 100 men, women and children, all members of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, were evicted from the C. H. Dibble plantation in Cross County, Arkansas, because of their membership in the Union. With only $16.00 among them and without adequate food, clothing, fire or shelter of any sort all the members were thrown upon the highway with their few belongings. Plantation owners throughout the area refused to allow them to get fire wood.

# MACHINES DOOM SOUTH'S TENANTS

Advertiser

## Tractors Rapidly Displacing Sharecroppers, Says Dr. Blalock

2-12-36

FAYETTEVILLE, ARK., Feb. 11.—(AP)—Thousands of Arkansas tenants and sharecroppers will be displaced within a few seasons by the rapid trend toward mechanization of the South's larger cotton plantations, thinks Dr. H. W. Blalock of the University of Arkansas.

Montgomery Ala.

Dr. Blalock, associate professor of rural economics and sociology, reported today findings of a recently completed survey among plantation owners. The trend toward extensive use of machinery, he said, is greatest in the delta and Red River bottom lands, in Arkansas.

"Nearly two out of every three cotton plantations in Arkansas are now using tractors," Dr. Blalock said. "Tractors are still largely used for preparing seed beds, grading, ditching and for power, rather than for cultivation. But the plantations that do not use tractors for cultivation are turning to mechanization by the use of team-powered machines, multirow cultivators, and in many other ways."

### Major Problem

Predicting the displacement of the tenants and sharecroppers, the investigator said the South's major social and economic problem will be to find work for the "already large surplus of population."

"One outstanding advantage of mechanization will put the Southern farmer in a much better position to meet foreign competition. It will tend, also, to reduce the cost of cotton goods, thereby benefiting the consumer. Both results would be desirable," he said.

One major obstacle remains to complete use of machinery on plantations—the dependence upon labor for cotton picking.

"The invention of a successful, economical cotton picker would free the planter of his dependence upon large amounts of labor and would cut the last thong which binds the laborer to the plantation," Dr. Blalock added.

Commenting that some planters are reluctant to use machinery because it will displace labor, the professor expressed the belief that competition, due to the relative lower cost of production by machinery, will force them to turn to machines.

### Plantation Records

"Out of 100 cotton plantation records studied recently, the plantation which produced the greatest net return on investment from farm operations in 1934 was one that was completely mechanized," the economist stated.

One planter reported that his recent experiments showed a cost of 6.37 cents a pound for cotton when produced with tractors; a cost of 9.39 a pound using the tractors to prepare the seed bed and sharecroppers to cultivate and gather the crop: and 17.31 cents a pound when produced altogether with sharecroppers on the old furnishing basis.

He said experiments at Stoneville, Miss., told a similar story. The cost an acre of labor, power and machinery when cultivated with one-half row cultivator drawn by a mule was $14.20; when cultivated with a one-row riding cultivator drawn by two mules the cost was $10.78; and the cost with a four-row riding cultivator, tractor drawn, was $5.20 an acre.

Planters are getting away from the idea that it is necessary to have labor on the plantation in order to insure an adequate supply when needed, Dr. Blalock said. He added it was not unusual to find cotton pickers hauled over 20 miles to the cotton fields.

### Social Problems

Discussing the social problems created by the displacement of labor through the use of machinery, Dr. Blalock said:

"If the displaced tenants drift into the nearby towns and cities, they will increase the supply of labor to such an extent that wages will be forced to very low levels for all common labor and money incomes of all laboring groups will be very low. Besides, at these low wages many tenants will not be able to find employment during the transition period.

"This influx of tenants into the towns and cities will cause many problems of relief beggery, crime, as well as problems of education, parks, playgrounds, and the like. Hence the tenant problem is of vital interest to the nearby towns and cities.

"The same conditions, but less severe, will prevail in other sections of the United States which attract this surplus farm population," Dr. Blalock concluded. "If they drift to the poor land, the problem of the cities will be diminished, but a social problem of a large percentage of people living at a very low standard of living will prevail."

**BOSTON, MASS MORNING GLOBE**

FEB 3 1936

## Day of Jubilee

There is no eraser of class lines like the empty stomach and the same eraser can also eradicate race and color. Southern planters are finding this out considerably to their surprise. "Poor white" sharecroppers are uniting with Negroes to better their economic lot. The movement in Northeastern Arkansas is being met by evictions, beatings, and summary trials. The white and Negro wage-earners, realizing that they are in the same boat, have banded together in a Southern Tenant Farmers' Union; planters deny the union right to organize, they break up meetings, deport organizers, make union membership sufficient ground for eviction, and blacklist evicted tenants. A hundred persons thus evicted from a 540-acre plantation were driven out of their cabins by deputy sheriffs into the snow and left by the road with their furniture in piles. The union housed the men in five tents and found transportation for the women to a nearby town, where they were lodged with friends. Antipathy of the landowners is so intense that meetings of the union are held secretly in lonely cabins. And yet the movement keeps on growing.

"The white men," said a Negro, "are working with us. They say they will stand back of us. The day of jubilee is coming sure."

# NEGRO FARM PROBLEM NEARING SETTLEMENT

Constitution

## 2 Confer on Plan To Remove Planters Where They Can Bo Back to Work.

3-1-36

PARKIN, Ark., Feb. 29.—(AP)—A solution to the controversy centering about a group of negro sharecroppers housed in a tent near Parkin was reported near this afternoon.

Sherwood Eddy, author and Y. M. C. A. figure, and Dr. William R. Amberson, a professor of the University of Tennessee Medical College at Memphis, conferred this afternoon with a number of planters on a plan to remove the tenant farmers from the colony to farms where they can go back to work.

Atlanta, Ga.

Earlier in the day, Mayor H. H. Melhorn revealed that "three or four ring-leaders" of the sharecropper colony had been warned to leave town after he said individual tenants had expressed a desire to accept contracts landowners had offered them but feared colony leaders "might throw them into the river."

"There won't be any trouble," Mayor Melhorn said. 'The ring-leaders promised to leave rather than face prosecution. The rest of the tenants seemed anxious to go to work when farms were offered them yesterday."

He termed as a "publicity stunt" a telegram H. L. Mitchell, Memphis, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, sent to Representative O'Day, of New York, in which Mitchell said aid was needed to prevent "wholesale massacre of homeless men, women and children."

"There is no hint of trouble," the mayor said. "The colonists have flour, cows, pigs and everything they need."

Earlier in the week, Governor Futrell had described the situation as "much ado about very little."

Mayor Melhorn expressed belief that Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt had asked Governor Futrell to make his personal investigation at Parkin, but the Governor said later in the day that he had not heard from Mrs. Roosevelt, and that the investigation "was made solely on my own initiative."

Mr. Eddy and Dr. Amberson expressed a desire to get as many of the negro farmers back on plantations as soon as possible.


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Arkansas.

Agriculture—1936
Labor Conditions.

# ARKANSAS TENANT EVICTIONS CHARGED

## John L. Lewis Investigator Says 21 Negro Families Now Living In Tents

WASHINGTON, March 28.—(AP)—A report of an investigator sent out by John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America, asserted today there had been additional evictions of tenant farmers and sharecroppers in Arkansas by planters bent upon crushing the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

The report, made by W. J. Sneed, representative of the Mine Workers, said 21 negro families, comprising 108 persons, had been evicted recently from a plantation in Cross County, Ark., and were living in tents supplied by the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

Sneed said other families had been evicted and were being fed and sheltered by other organizations.

The Cross County evictions, Sneed said, had been investigated by Gov. J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas, who "reported there was much ado about nothing."

"In no other section of America," said the report, "is labor more outrageously mistreated and oppressed than in certain areas of Southern States."

When the tenants organized their union, Sneed continued, "the landlords inaugurated a ruthless campaign of evictions and violence to workers and their families similar to that with which coal miners were forced to contend years ago in some mining fields of the country."

"Many sharecroppers and tenant farmers," the report continued, "were thrown out of work when vast areas of cotton growing land were taken out of cultivation by the Government. Bad was their plight before their happened, the situation of these people became many times worse."

The report contained also a statement from H. L. Mitchell, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, in which he said the landlords had refused to cooperate with "interested people such as Brooks Hays, assistant Resettlement Administrator in Washington, 'mediating' the intolerable situation now existing."

The statement said also there were "reports from reliable sources, union and non-union, to indicate that bands of outlaws are being formed to wipe out the Union."

# ADDITIONAL CROPPERS EVICTED BY PLANTERS

## 108 Tenant Farmers Living in Tents After Removal From Lands.

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3-29-36

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# EVICTIONS ARE CHARGED

## Mine Workers' Representative Reports on Tenant Situation

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# Southern Planters Use Mob Violence Says Investigator

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Arkansas plantation landlords fighting against the unionization of tenant farmers and sharecroppers are employing threats of lynchings, "massacre," wholesale evictions as well as making use of county officers to drive the homeless and destitute families away and offering "yellow dog contracts" declared W. J. Sneed in a report to John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers of America this week. Sneed was sent to Lewis is to make an investigation of conditions which will be fully published in the April 15 issue of "The United Mine Workers Journal."

4-4-36

The charges made by Sneed were made public through Gardner Jackson, chairman of the National Committee on Rural Social Planning which has been conducting a campaign among legislative and administrative agencies here this week to improve the lot of the tenant farmers and sharecroppers.

A number of cases were outlined by Sneed, most of them Negroes. He said in part:

"All of those evicted were denied relief as well as W. P. A. work. Many of these families, including women and children, slept by the roadside in the months of January and February, in the snow and cold. Time and again appeal has been made to the public authorities relative to conditions that affect the sharecroppers, tenant farmers and day laborers in the state of Arkansas, but without success.

"In a country church near Earle Arkansas, where a meeting was in progress on January 16, with about fifty men and women present, deputy sheriffs appeared with shotguns, telling those present to file out of the meeting and go home and that they would not allow any more union meetings.

"The doorkeeper was arrested and placed in jail. Deputies returning to the meeting place, opened fire on a group of colored people traveling on the road, wounding two men. The sheriff of Cross County led a procession to the tent colony near Parkin and warned them to leave the county within 48 hours, also telling leader Bennie Fleming, if he did not leave before dark he would be lynched.

"Beginning the first of March each year the sharecropper is furished with supplies based on acreage planted in cotton by each tenant, which amounts to 75 cents or $1 per acre, per month. Ten acres at 75 cents means $1.50 per month and this applies only to cultivation lasting five months. Day labor is paid from 50 to 75 cents per day, three or four days a week, working from up to down, from sun to sun.

"Cotton picking in the fall begins in September and the rate of pay is 35 cents per hundred pounds, top price 75 cents per hundred. The average picker picks an average of 125 pounds per day."

A communication which Sneed also brought from the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union stated that "new evictions of union members are reported daily" and that "most of them are made without any sort of settlement of wages due the workers."

# Says P[illegible]age Is Worse Than Slavery

## Condition of Negro Share-Croppers

4-16-36

## IS LAMENTABLE

## Attacks Southern Farming System

Little Rock, April [illegible] (ANP)—"In many respects the condition of the Negro in these parts is worse than under the chattel slavery" declared Sherwood Eddy, famous writer and lecturer, in a statement made public here last week, following a visit in this state.

"The former slave owner," continued Mr. Eddy, "cared for his slave and his mule and most of them were humane. But the modern land-owner is under no such obligation to the poor Negro share-croppers, who continue in economic slavery without civil liberties, denied the right to vote and refused basic elemental justice which they cannot expect in the planters courts."

The writer and lecturer attacked the share-cropping system of farming in strong terms as well a sthe tenant system, following an extended visit in the state of Arkansas. Examples of how the Negro share-cropper and tenant farmers, who under the Sharecroppers union, are trying to better their condition are living, were cited, among which was that of a colony of Negro farmers who had been evicted. Eddy, along with another white man, visited one of these colonies and his comment on the situation was as follows:

"I went out with several friends, including a professor of the state university, to visit one colored colony recently evicted. We found families huddled in six little tents with a scanty supply of food. They had been driven from their homes into the snow on the worst day of the recent blizzard. I met the leader, a colored man who had only that morning been threatened with lynching if he did not leave the state before night.

"Since his wife was pregnant and there were five children, two of whom were sick, he dared not stay and face violence or death. He told me that he had seen one of his neighbors hanged because he had asked for his account and his full half of the crop. He fled the day I was there."

That the landowners, who according to Mr. Eddy, are holding the Negroes in peonage, have the support of the officers of the law is shown by his statement that "within half an

hour after we had arrived at the tent colony and begun to investigate conditions to see if we could help, we were arrested by Deputy Sheriffs Tip Sullivan and J. W. Shelby of Crittenden county. We were taken to a large cotton store and locked in for two hours and a score of planters were brought in to tell us 'the truth about these damned niggers who won't work.'

"They bitterly resented our coming from other states seemingly to, interfere with their victims. One deputy said one of the negroes "would soon die of sudden pneumonia or lynching" and another said that we ought to be shot while a third threatened that if we interferred with 'these niggers' there would be another 'Elaine Massacre' when they killed many of them i nan adjoining county."

The plight of the share-cropper and tenant farmer was further revealed by the declaration that the share-chopper in the state of Arkansas received an average of $212 per annum. in addition to his corn meal flour and bacon and his "keep." Many of them, the survey made by Eddy and his group disclosed, did not receive this much in cash during the year. Robbery and cheating were rampant, which "makes a devastating impression to drive through teh richest soil in the United States and see the poorest human beings living in tumble-down shanties, rewarded for hookworm, malaria and illiteracy. Will Bright, one of the share-croppers received $4.61 in cash for his entire family after a year's work

## BODY PLANS STRIKE OF TENANT FARMERS

4-17-36

WASHINGTON, April 16.—(AP)—Officials of the national committee on rural social planning today disclosed plans for providing financial aid and other assistance for a strike of tenant farmers in three Arkansas counties before mid-July.

Gardner Jackson, chairman of the commitee, asserted several thousand tenant farmers will be called to walk out in the midst of "cotton chopping time" when large numbers of laborers are needed for work in the fields.

At present, it is planned to confine the strike to Cross, Crittenden and St. Francis counties in northeastern Arkansas where the Southern Tenant Farmer Union was said to be most firmly entrenched, Jackson said.

## DR. MARTIN REPLIES TO ADDRESS BY EDDY

### Claims Landlords Have Lost Money Last Few Years

### COMMUNISM ACCUSATION

4-22-36

### Claims Speaker Here Arousing Class Prejudice, Lining Up With Socialism and Upholding Russia

Sherwood Eddy in pleading the plight of sharecroppers overlooks the fact that they have made a living and prospered somewhat while their landlords were losing money, and in some cases their farms and homes, Dr. T. T. Martin, Blue Mountain, Miss., said at Central Baptist Church last night in replying to Mr. Eddy's address here Sunday.

Dr. Martin, an evangelist for 36 years, accused Mr. Eddy of arousing class prejudice, lining up with Socialists and Communists, taking up the work of those advocating violence, and upholding Russia.

**Just Living Only**

"Mr. Eddy held up the case of a sharecropper with a family of eight who at the end of the year had $4.60 coming to him. I have a family of seven. I have worked hard. And I did not have $4.60 coming to me at the end of the year. The sharecropper had the living of his eight for the year; I had the living of my seven for the year.

"A farmer yesterday from the Mississippi Delta told me that he would be glad to have the 60 cents and let the sharecroppers keep the four dollars, that in four years he had lost $10,000. All over this land during the depression farmers who rent land to sharecroppers have been fighting with their backs to the wall. Many have lost their farms and homes. There was not one word of sympathy from Mr Eddy for these burdened men.

"Mr. Eddy disclaimed connection with Socialism or Communism. Yet he lined up with them. I was in Tyronza, Ark., when this trouble started and it was fomented by Socialists or Communists.

"I grieved over Mr. Eddy and his associates being put in jail; yet he was taking up the work of those who advocated violence. He held up Russia and commended the Russian situation. The officers were apprehensive of violence, of race war, and they arrested these men.

**One Lynching to 500**

"Concerning lynchings in the south, there has been just one lynching in the south to 500 in Russia. Yet Mr. Eddy commends Russia. While we of the south are opposed to mob violence, no consideration is ever given by those who abuse the south because of mobs, of the terrible provocation. Mistakes have been made and innocent people have suffered. So innocent non-union men have been mobbed and murdered in the north."

"Every right thinking man will indorse what Mr. Eddy said against war. There is much good in his idea of co-operation in business. It would be an untold blessing to America if every business in America was strictly on a co-operative basis.

"And his deep sympathy for the poor is deserving of praise. There is danger, however, in the idea of helping the poor, of making the impression that Christianity puts a premium on rags.

## 'RICH LAND'---POVERTY EDDY DESCRIBES DIXIE

### Explains Experimental Farm To Solve Five Major Problems.

4-20-36

MEMPHIS, Tenn., April 19.—(AP)—War, fascism and economic distress as interpreted by the Arkansas share-cropper situation were given as major threats to civilization by Dr. Sherwood Eddy today.

Dr. Eddy left for Hillhouse, Miss., a farm of 2138 acres, which was bought at "$5 an acre" and is now occupied by 24 families through Eddy's assistance.

"Ultimately we hope to take 100 more families," said Dr. Eddy. "It is being operated on a system based on justice, mercy and sound economic principles.

"Negroes were brought to the farm at the request of the white tenants and share-croppers selected to live there. There is no social equality between the two, only a hope for an understanding between them.

"We are trying to work out five problems: To stand for civil liberties for all; try to prevent share croppers and tenants from sinking to ruin; attempt to promote co-operative labor; solve the problem of technological unemployment; solve the race problem. It is here in the south where the races meet. We don't know much about it in New York. The problem is delicate and difficult, but some day it will be solved."

Describing the Arkansas situation, Dr. Eddy declared:

"We saw the face of slavery, feudalism and fascism on the part of planters and landowners toward poor evicted share-croppers and tenant farmers, both black and white.

"We found peonage, serfdom, poverty, disease and sometimes terror and violence. The ordinary share cropper is receiving an average of $12 yearly per family apart from rent, including an advance for food charged at the highest prices and a high rate of interest.

"It makes a devastating impression to drive through the richest soil in the United States and see the poorest human beings living in tumble-down shanties, rewarded for their toil by poverty, pellagra, hookworm, malaria and illiteracy."

## EDDY RAPS ARKANSAS' TENANT TREATMENT

### Says 25,000 Sharecroppers Lose Homes Over Union

4-20-36

### COMPARED TO OLD RUSSIA

### Slavery, Peonage, Serfdom, Poverty, Feudalism and Fascism Alleged by Speaker, Who Claims Families Cheated

The menace of approaching world conflict, the growth of fascism, and "the chattel slave status" of Mid-South sharecroppers were discussed by Sherwood Eddy, New York lecturer-writer-traveler, yesterday afternoon at First Methodist Church.

Speaking to an audience of 500, by invitation of the Memphis ministers, Mr. Eddy devoted the greater portion of his hour-and-30-minute address to the co-operative farm which he has established at Hillhouse, Miss., for sharecroppers and tenant farmers.

"On our visit to Arkansas, we learned that 25,000 of the poorest sharecroppers have been evicted from their homes or threatened with eviction because they formed the Southern Tenant Farmers Union to help better their plight," he said. "We saw slavery, peonage, serfdom, poverty, disease, feudalism and fascism on the part of the landlords such as existed in Acarist Russia prior to the revolution.

**Charges Unfair Deductions**

"According to the best authority only one in 50 receives his full share of the crops without unjust or avaricious deductions. It makes a devastating impression to drive through the richest soil in the United States and to see the poorest human beings living in tumble-down shanties, rewarded for their toil by hookworm, pellagra, malaria and illiteracy."

After investigating conditions in three states, Mr. Eddy said he bought the 2,158-acre farm at Hillhouse and made arrangements for 22 families, negro and white, to settle there as sharecroppers on a co-operative farm.

He said the need for money to finance the farm was great, but no collection was taken at yesterday's meeting. However, many of Mr. Eddy's books and pamphelts were placed on sale for those who wished to buy them after hearing the address.

Of world conditions, the speaker said that three countries threaten the peace of civilization, Italy, Germany and Japan.

"All three belong to the "have-not' nations," he said. "They have an excess population to which they can offer no land and no work outside the military. Mussolini is suffering from sweelhead. Hitler is strewing Austria with ilterature, tearing up treaties and persecuting the 10 principal elements of his population all at once.

"Hitler, half madman, half genius, is breaking Europe up into two armed camps. On one side are Germany, Japan, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and probably Poland, while on the other will be France, Great Britain, the Little Entente, Belgium, Turkey. Italy will waver to the last, but will not dare to side against the British navy that could lay waste her coastal cities.

Mr. Eddy described the development of "Fascism or pre-Fascism" in this country as "alarming."

"Seventeen states have recently passed gag laws and the Tydings bill, which ha salready passed the Senate, would put me in jail for the speech I am making here today," he said. "There is a growing denial of the right of the poverty-stricken and the distressed to organize and enpoy the elemental, simple right of collective bargaining. We are facing a steady lessening of our liberties."

Mr. Eddy said that over $9,000 already has been contributed toward the initial payment on the co-operative farm at Hillhouse atn d tha "God is going to provide the money" for it.

Following his address, an open forum was conducted, with Mr. Franklin presiding. Dr. J. J. Walker, pastor of East End Christian Church, introduced the speaker, and Dr. George Stoves, of First Methodist Church, gave the opening prayer.

Agriculture - 1936 I Arkansas.
Labor Conditions.

# ARKANSAS SHARECROPPERS SUSPICIOUS OF GOV. FUTRELL'S TARDY PROMISES

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"Gov. Futrell's action marks a radical departure from his former attitude toward the dispossessed and disinherited citizens of his states," said J. R. Butler, union head of White county, Ark., who added Futrell had been "one of the most bitter opponents of the organized sharecroppers and other farm laborers" and had refused to interfere in violence by planters in the recent strike which the governor said was fostered by "radicals."

At the same time the union, which says it has 30,000 Negro and white members in the East Arkansas cotton country, agreed to cooperate fully with Gov. Futrell's proposal for a Southside conference on the farm tenancy problem which has met the approval of several Dixie governors and sociologists.

"Meanwhile the governor could show his good faith by using his power to produce the body of Frank Weems, who was murdered on a union picket line several weeks ago near Earle, Ark., by bringing to justice the floggers of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, the Rev. Claude Williams and others, and by ordering the release of all union members held in the St. Francis county convict farm and in the Crittenden county jail," Butler said.

When told of the union's attitude, Gov. Futrell said in Little Rock "If they doubt my sincerity, that's all I have to say." He also denied statements that he had attempted to break the strike in every way by saying, "No forces acting under authority of the state were employed to stop this strike. I didn't interfere in one way or another.

"The governor has no authority whatever to go into any county and make an investigation of crime. No money is appropriated for that purpose. Enforcement of the law is left in the hands of authorities of each county to act through the grand jury and the prosecuting attorney."

## *FARM TENANT BODY NAMED BY FUTRELL*

### *Arkansas Governor Appoints 38 to Special Commission To Study Situation.*

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Aug. 26.—(AP)—Governor J. M. Futrell late today announced appointment of 38 persons to his special state commission to study fully the farm-tenant and sharecropper situation in Arkansas and requested the commission to hold its first meeting in Hot Springs Monday, September 21.

The Arkansas commission, charged with examining the tenant problem with a view of evolving a solution designed to extend farm home ownership to field labor now working on a share-basis, will form the nucleus for a southwide conference on the same subject, to be sponsorede by the governor.

Futrell said he was advising the governors of all the cotton-growing states of the appointment of the Arkansas commission and that he hoped to assemble the southwide meeting by November.

C. E. Palmer of Texarkana, publisher of south Arkansas newspapers, was named chairman of the commission, to which other appointments are to be made.

Those named to the commission with Mr. Palmer included Dean Dan T. Gray, of the University of Arkansas College of Agriculture, Fayetteville; Dr. A. C. Millar, editor of the Arkansas Methodist, Little Rock; Superintendent J. B. Watson of the A. M. and N. College, Pine Bluff; Extension Service Director C. C. Randall, Little Rock; State Works Progress Administrator Floyd Sharp, Little Rock; James Hammond, Memphis publisher; T. Roy Reid, regional resettlement administration director.

## SYMPTOMS AND THE DISEASE

Governor J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas, has announced that he intends to call a conference to discuss the problem of farm tenancy. Practically all of the governors of Southern States have pledged cooperation in such a move.

It is particularly appropriate that Arkansas where the tenancy problem has become most acute should be the site for such a conference. If any good is to come from such a conference of Southern leaders much will depend on the spirit of those who sponsor it.

If it is to be merely a move to condemn "outside agitators" who are accused of creating unrest among tenants it will be of no value. On the other hand if it is to be dominated by those who would lay all the blame on the landlords it will be equally valueless.

Strife among tenants and the beatings administered recently by a few landowners are symptoms of a disease. To merely quibble and argue over the symptoms will not cure the disease or even be of help in discussing the underlying causes. Medical science finally went to the swamps to halt the ravages of yellow fever. If a solution to the tenancy proble mis to be found it will not be by beating "outside agitators" or by passing laws to force landlords to charge tenants less rent.

The Bankhead-Jones tenant farm bill is generally believed to embody the hopes of those who hope to see an early solution to increasing tenancy. It is possible that the various States can also be of help in encouraging independent farm owners.

If Governor Futtrell's conference can arrive at some means of State-aid it will have served a good purpose.

## *Sharecroppers and Sob Sisters*

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We don't know what he can find in Arkansas, but we can tell him much about Georgia. The reds or communists have been trying to organize the tenants and sharecroppers into a union to strike for better conditions, but they have about abandoned the idea. They should have included the landlords in the same union. The man with the land is the poorest man in Georgia. He not only has lost the shirt from his back, but he has to struggle under a load of debt. The tenant or the sharecropper has at least had a living, and can move away if the crop fails or if things go bad. The landlord has to stay by the ship as long as there is a penny of equity in sight or to be hoped for. The sharecropper is one who eats with the landlord or on him until the year ends. If the crop fails both are sunk, but the sharecropper goes to another landlord that has not yet sunk.

If the reds could form a union consisting of wages hands, tenants and sharecroppers and landlords, and these could all find somebody to strike against, that would be fine and dandy. About the only person against whom they could strike would be their politician friend who promises them everything as he has promised since Hector was a pup.

But as matters now stand in this country it seems the weather man is the real enemy of the people. He has given drouths and storms until it is time to call him to account.

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### Will Help Study Problem of Sharecropper

From Little Rock Bureau of The Commercial Appeal

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The general committee is expected to meet in Hot Springs Sept. 21, to begin a study of the problems. In announcing the list today, Governor Futrell said the five men he appointed had been recommended by Educational Director R. B. Smith as "good substantial tenant farmers."

# Tenant Investigation

BY GEORGE MORRIS

For some reason the farm tenant problem seems to have centered in Arkansas. That was where the union of tenant farmers first made its appearance and where most of the activity has been confined. So far the net result has been to make the organization a financially profitable concern for organizers, who collect dues from the tenants and generous contributions from northern sympathizers, who accept without question lurid tales calculated to touch both the heart and pocket-book.

In order to get to the bottom of the situation and determine to what extent tenants are victimized by landlords and union organizers, either or both, and to find a remedy, if there is one, Governor Futrell is proceeding to make a careful selection of a committee of 50, representing planters, tenants, academic students of the problem and others not directly affected and will not be influenced by any consideration other than facts developed by the inquiry. On that basis the investigation should be beneficial. Certainly the findings of a committee such as that cannot by any stretch of imagination be characterized as a whitewash.

While the committee is expected to proceed with an open mind and let the chips fall where they may, there are certain reasonable assumptions which the public takes for granted. One is that there are planters who take every known advantage of their tenants, preventing them from raising a garden, keeping a cow, hogs and chickens, and requiring them to depend exclusively upon the plantation commissary for subsistence at prices far beyond the retail cost elsewhere. Another is that there is a much larger group of planters who make every reasonable concession with the view to having satisfied tenants, resulting, at times, in substantial loss to themselves. If the records are available the committee will have no difficulty in separating the groups and drawing a sharp line of distinction between them.

Anyone with farming experience knows that just as there are two classes of planters, there are two classes of tenants. There is the hard-working, intelligent, industrious tenant, who may be depended upon to produce the best possible crop that labor can grow, stay with it, gather it and pay his bills at the end of the year. Then there is the ignorant, shiftless, irresponsible tenant, whose sole object is to get as much as he can and give as little in return. As a lightning calculator he is first to know whether he has been able to wheedle the planter out of more than the proceeds of the crop are worth. Immediately upon discovering this interesting fact, he is no longer concerned with the outcome, and frequently moves on and leaves the planter to realize what he can from the crop that has already cost more than it is worth.

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The income of the average tenant is low, but considering the number of days he is employed in producing and gathering a crop it probably is higher than the average income of coal miners and sweatshop workers. The tenant pays no rent, he has many days available for employment not connected with the production of a crop. In a majority of instances his living quarters are not ideal by any means, but they compare favorably with those of industrial workers of the same capacity and order of mentality that characterizes the average tenant.

It is often assumed that the living conditions of the tenant are determined by the landlord, but anyone with scant familiarity with the situation knows that the landlord has pride in the appearance of tenant houses and premises. If it were possible he would have model conditions. Some have attempted it only to discover that fences are turned into firewood in winter and glass windows are knocked out for ventilation in summer. The ambition of the average tenant is to have no more personal property than can be moved between sundown and sunup and his idea of luxury is a second-hand automobile that runs sometime.

At the bottom of the tenant problem is ignorance. Perhaps it is the fault of the white man that the negro tenant farmer has made so little progress intellectually, that he has not been afforded advantages that would make him more energetic and ambitious and inspire him with a desire to get ahead. But there are notable exceptions. Some of the prosperous landowners are negroes. They found their opportunity when they were prepared to assume it. They rose above the common level by hard work and strict attention to business. The ladder of success is crowded at the top with men who started at the beginning in industry and agriculture. They rose because of what they had in them, despite obstacles. The masses will always be dependent upon direction and supervision and satisfied with as little as they can get along on. When the tenant is prepared for something better he will find no difficulty in improving his situation. The world long ago learned the futility of attempting to make silk purses out of sows' ears.

## [illegible] Peonage In Arkansas

LITTLE ROCK, ARK., Sept. 15.—(AP)—Two special attorneys for the Department of Justice, here to present to a Federal grand jury evidence of possible peonage law violations, will personally investigate conditions in eastern Arkansas.

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From a reliable source in the Justice Department at Washington it was learned today that George P. Jones, special assistant to the Attorney General, named Aug. 12 to present the Government's peonage case, had been withdrawn and Dean designated as substitute.

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The income of the average tenant is low, but considering the number of days he is employed in producing and gathering a crop it probably is higher than the average income of coal miners and sweatshop workers. The tenant pays no rent, he has many days available for employment not connected with the production of a crop. In a majority of instances his living quarters are not ideal by any means, but they compare favorably with those of industrial workers of the same capacity and order of mentality that characterizes the average tenant.

It is often assumed that the living conditions of the tenant are determined by the landlord, but anyone with scant familiarity with the situation knows that the landlord has pride in the appearance of tenant houses and premises. If it were possible he would have model conditions. Some have attempted it only to discover that fences are turned into firewood in winter and glass windows are knocked out for ventilation in summer. The ambition of the average tenant is to have no more personal property than can be moved between sundown and sunup and his idea of luxury is a second-hand automobile that runs sometime.

At the bottom of the tenant problem is ignorance. Perhaps it is the fault of the white man that the negro tenant farmer has made so little progress intellectually, that he has not been afforded advantages that would make him more energetic and ambitious and inspire him with a desire to get ahead. But there are notable exceptions. Some of the prosperous landowners are negroes. They found their opportunity when they were prepared to assume it. They rose above the common level by hard work and strict attention to business. The ladder of success is crowded at the top with men who started at the beginning in industry and agriculture. They rose because of what they had in them, despite obstacles. The masses will always be dependent upon direction and supervision and satisfied with as little as they can get along on. When the tenant is prepared for something better he will find no difficulty in improving his situation. The world long ago learned the futility of attempting to make silk purses out of sows' ears.

## Peonage In Arkansas

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Labor Conditions.

II

Arkansas.

from Pulaski chancery, record amended by stipulation.

4458—H. P. Greer vs. Bess Rowland Greer, from Jefferson chancery; appellee's motion for suit money and attorney fee, submitted.

4407—R. H. Burrow, county judge, vs. Harve Floyd, from Franklin circuit; appellant given till Oct. 14.

4408—R. H. Burrow, county judge, vs. Lonnie Batchelor, from Franklin circuit, appellant given till Oct. 14.

4487—Coca-Cola Bottling Co. vs. Herbert Massey, from Jackson circuit, record amended under Rule 24.

4434—Ethel Laura Acker vs. T. A. Watkins, from White circuit; cross appeal granted; submitted on motion to dismiss appeal.

Expressing grave concern over the increase in farm tenancy, which is mostly prevalent in the south, the president invited Senator Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas, chairman of the House agriculture committee to meet with him in December and draw up corrective legislation.

# JURY NAMES PLANTER ON U. S. SLAVE CHARGE

## Paul Peacher Indicted After Probe at Little Rock

## NEGRO WORKERS INVOLVED

9-25-36

### District Attorney Claims Men Arrested, Sentenced at Earle to Work on Marshal's Farm —Trial in November

By The Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Sept. 24.—A federal grand jury indictment returned here late today charged an East Arkansas official with violating the anti-slavery statutes of the United States by obtaining laborers for his farm through false arrests.

The indictment named Paul D. Peacher, cotton planter, city marshal of Earle, Ark., and former deputy sheriff of Crittenden County. Eight counts alleged violation of section 443, title 18 of the U. S. criminal code, a post-Civil War enactment of 1866.

U. S. District Attorney Fred Isgrig said the charge was "aiding and abetting in holding in slavery."

**Passed At Marion**

As the federal jurors heard testimony from residents and officials of Crittenden County, that county's grand jury said today at Marion that it had already investigated charges of forced labor and intimidation and that "we have not found any evidence of any violations of the law in any instance." It offered to co-operate in any fereral inquiry.

Eight negro field hands were among those called before the federal investigating body. Others were T. S. Mitchell, mayor of Earle, where disturbances were reported early this year; A. B. Carter, deputy county clerk of Crittenden County, and B. L. Damron, special agent with the federal bureau of investigation.

After the jury was discharged here, Isgrig joined Gordon Dean, special assistant to the U. S. attorney general, and Richard P. Shanahan, attorney for the criminal division of the federal bureau of investigation, who were in charge of the grand jury inquiry, in announcing steps had been taken "to protect all witnesses before the grand jury from intimidation."

**Bond at $5,000**

The jury, assembled to hear charges of peonage in the East Arkansas sharecropper belt, completed its work in about three hours.

Peacher's bond was fixed at $5,000 but he was not immediately taken into custody.

"The eight counts charged Peacher with falsely charging eight negroes with vagrancy and bringing them before Mayor Mitchell in justice court at Earle, where they were illegally convicted and sentenced to work on Peacher's farm for his own use and benefit," said Shanahan.

After giving out the names of the eight negroes involved, Isgrig recalled the list, asserting "I don't want them intimidated."

"The truth of the matter is the investigation involved 20 to 25 negroes railroaded on trumped up charges," said the prosecutor.

**Protect Witnesses**

He said he had notified all witnesses appearing before the grand jury to report to him "any threat of intimidation as a result of their testimony" and that he had also discussed this with Mayor Mitchell and Mr. Carter.

"I notified Mitchell and Carter to go back home and tell the citizenship of the community they had better see that these witnesses are protected," said Isgrig. "These people must not be molested, even by suggestion. There will be prompt prosecution by the government of any threat against them."

Dean said he had written to Sheriff Howard Curlin of Crittenden County "requesting that he see that none of these negroes who appeared before the grand jury is intimidated."

The district attorney said he planned to try the Peacher indictment at the regular term of district court in Jonesboro in November.

**Woman Is Surprised**

The Department of Justice investigation followed charges that peonage was practiced in the sharecropper belt.

Willie Sue Blagden, 29, Socialist social worker, who charged she and Claude C. Williams, of Little Rock, were flogged at Earle last June during a cotton-choppers' strike called by the Southern Farmers Tenant Union, expressed "surprise" at Memphis today at the Crittenden County grand jury report.

"I would have been glad to have gone over there and testified," said Miss Blagden, who has filed federal court damage suits against five Crittenden County men for her alleged whipping.

E. J. White, Crittenden grand jury foreman, said at Marion Miss Blagden and Mr. Williams had been invited to appear "but did not show up."

The county grand jury decried published reports "that conditions in Crittenden County are not safe, that crimes have been committed against defenseless visitors."

"It has been charged that humble citizens have been forced to labor by threats, intimidation, guns and illegal process," said the jury. "Consequently we have felt it our duty to make an investigation into such alleged law violations and we beg to report that we have not found any evidence of any violations of the law in any instance."

# COMMISSION INTO TENANT FARM PROBLEM

10-2-36

## J. B. Watson Meets With Arkansas Governor's Group of Experts

HOT SPRINGS.—(Special) — Governor Futrell's Arkansas Farm Tenant Commission, appointed to study the farm tenant problem in this state, held a two-day session here Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 21 and 22.

Dr. J. B. Watson, president of the Arkansas State A. and M. college at Pine Bluff, is the only Negro member of the commission. He was named to a special committee of 10 which will formulate a plan to be submitted to the commission at its next meeting.

An All-South farm tenant meeting, of which the Arkansas body is a nucleus, will be held here in November.

Although rumors were current before the commission met that the Southern Farm Tenant union, an organization of sharecroppers, would use violence to gain representation in the commission's sessions, no disorder was evidenced. The meeting was harmonious.

**No Radical Bent**

W. L. Blackstone, a representative of the union, addressed the commission. He said that the union had no inclination toward radicalism.

"God forbid," he said, "that we wish to bring about any violence. That isn't the intention of the Southern Farm Tenant Union."

Blackstone himself is a sharecropper. He said that the union is striving to maintain peace between the tenants and the landowers. Before anything can be accomplished, he said, there must be confidence, respect and cooperation on the part of the tenants and the owners of large plantations.

One of the reasons, he said, for present conditions in eastern Arkansas is that owners of large plantations insist on employing the cheapest labor.

The commission spent the two days in open forum assembling data on all phases of tenancy. Summing up the findings, Dean Dan T Gray of the University of Arkansas college of agriculture, said that the commission members agreed on four points:

1. There is a problem to be solved.

2. Generally speaking something must be done to move people from tenancy to ownership.

3. It is a long-term problem, but one needing immediate attack.

4. The Bankhead-Jones tenant bill "points the way" but requires an amendment "to tie it in more closely with the states."

The individual members disagreed only as to the methods of attacking the problem.

**Landowners Criticized**

The closing session was enlivened by a spirited address by Mrs. Scott Wood, president of the Arkansas Council of Parents and Teachers. She criticized the large plantation owners for their refusal to recognize tenant unions, and declared that if education was necessary for the sharecropper, a little education also might not be a bad thing for the large plantation owner.

"Most of the suggestions that have been made," she said, "have been toward the plan of dividing the big plantations into small farms and having a country of small landowers. That is all right as a final objective, but it will take years to accomplish it, and what is to be done in the meantime? One of the practical things, it seems to me, for the immediate future, must be along the line of education, and the improvement of the housing, sanitary and health conditions of these people.

"We must give the children of the sharecroppers much better educational opportunities, and I believe that the sharecroppers should be organized into adult education classes.

"If you go to any part of the cotton country and ask a plantation owner (and this applies to my own relations as well as to others) what he would do if his tenants were to start to organize a union for better conditions, it would be a safe bet, nine times out of 10, that he would say, "I would take the agitators to the county line, kick them over and tell them never to come back.'

"I have asked that question and gotten that same reply in substance from some of the finest people in the county. It is that Bourbon spirit which has caused our state to be advertised so unfavorably all over the nation and even in foreign countries. That is the spirit which has led them to the alleged flogging and other criminal acts we have read about.

**Who Are They?**

"What gives the plantation owners such an exalted opinion of themselves that they thing they can ignore and set aside the constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and freedom of opinion?

"Every other industry in the country has had to put up with unions and collective bargaining for the protection of employes. Why should plantation owners consider themselves immune?"

Mrs. Woods said that the commission should condemn unlawful acts alleged to have been committed in the state in connection with the farm tenant situation, and that the commission should call upon officers to protect all groups in their lawful right of assembly and free speech, even though they do not approve of what is advocated. She also contended that while the federal government had considerable responsibility in the tenant welfare, it also was the responsibility of the state and that citizens of Arkansas should not be found wanting in measuring up to their individual responsibility.

J. O. E. Beck, Hughes, one of the largest and most influential planters in the state, said he has tried to inspire the young men in his employ to become land owners.

He would much rather have renters than sharecroppers, he said. There were times in the past when the renters were content, he said, and then came the automobiles, and they sold their stock and bought cars, and some of them now are sharecroppers.

**Renters Better Security**

Mr. Beck also voiced the opinion that renters were more desirable than sharecroppers and better security. When a sharecropper decides to leave there is no way in which to fulfill his contract, he said. Were drastic steps of that nature taken the land owner would be charged with peonage, he declared. He thought that the movement to rectify alleged evils of the sharecropper system would require a long time. He regretted the unfavorable publicity that had been given the state a few weeks ago because of occurances in eastern Arkansas.

Dr. J. T. Sanders, of Dallas, affiliated with the Resettlement Administration in that state, but strictly as an individual, said that one of the useful functions of tenancy lies in the fact that it provided machinery by which tenants can climb to ownership and trains tenants to managership.

Dr. A. C. Miller, of Little Rock, editor of the Arkansas Methodist, said he was in the employer's class and that the church was much in sympathy with the poor, but that leaders in the churches depend largely for support on the other class. Ministers have told him they have found that some of the poorer class are reluctant to attend church, believing that because they may not have good enough clothes they would not be welcome. Dr. Miller referred to the publicty that Arkansas had been given in newspapers thoughout the East and said there was a class of people always ready, if there was bad news about the state, to spread it.

**Strong Must Protect Weak**

He got a rousing round of applause when he declared that "every citizen is entitled to the protection of the law" and that "mobs are always illegal." He said he might not agree with the Southern Farm Tenant Union, but he conceded that it had the right to organize, to meet and voice its opinions, provided that this was done in an orderly manner. He declared that the strong must ever protect the weak and that there must be more respect for law and order in Arkansas.

Planters, tenants, sharecroppers, educators and business men joined in expressing thanks to the commission for the start made. C. E. Palmer, commission chairman, described it as "most gratifying."

J. R. Butler, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, bitter critic of conditions in eastern Arkansas's plantation belt, handed a letter of thanks to the commission "for the gracious reception" given the union representatives during the session. He pledged cooperation with the work of the commission and endorsed the proposed Southwide conference.

Closing the session, the governor asked the commission to do two things—"find out what the state can do at once to alleviate the condition of tenants and start a drive on the national government for general and more lasting action."

# FIVE PLANS PROPOSED FOR TENANT PROBLEM

Commercial Appeal

## Arkansas Commission Given Many Suggestions

### TENTATIVE GROUPS MADE

10-3-36

### Codification of Would-Be Cures Will Be Followed by Discussion Before General Meeting of Group

Memphis,

By The Associated Press.

HOT SPRINGS, Oct. 2.—C. E. Palmer, chairman of the Arkansas Farm Tenancy Commission, seeking to improve the condition of tenants and sharecroppers, said today that proposals for a concrete program were coming to the commission in volume and that they fell into five major classifications for social and economic betterment.

The submitted proposals, as segregated to date by Charles Goslee, Hot Springs editor and secretary of the commission, call for:

**Plans Outlined**

1. A program of education among both adults and children.
2. A program for health improvement.
3. Establishment of county boards to review and arbitrate crop settlement and other disputes arising between landlords and tenants.
4. Financing of the tenants' "furnish" (the equipment and live stock which he supplies in the contract with the landlord) through co-operatives to eliminate high prices and high interest rates on these supplies.
5. A system of farm home ownership through federal aid and state co-operation.

"Proposals to date fall roughly under these headings, but others are coming in daily," said Goslee. "All are to be studied and codified to eliminate duplication and for clarification, by the special committee appointed for the purpose and all will be considered by the commission as a whole."

When the 58-member commission, appointed by Governor Futrell, met and organized in Hot Springs last week, it conducted a two-day open forum on the sharecropper problem and then called on the membership to submit in writing specific plans for meeting the problem.

**To Examine Proposals**

A committee of 19, headed by J. O. E. Beck, Hughes planter, was named to examine and codify the proposals.

Palmer said today this committee would meet within two or three weeks and make recommendations, to be submitted to a meeting of the full commission.

Governor Futrell urged the group to seek first a program for state action which would lay the groundwork for a general attack on the problem. He has made tentative plans for sponsoring a southwide conference on the subject in November. Chairman Palmer has suggested that all states having a tenant problem be invited to attend.

# CITY MARSHAL IS INDICTED FOR PEONAGE

## Arkansas Officer Broke Anti-Slave Law, Grand Jury Finds

10-4-36

LITTLE ROCK.—The indictment of City Marshal Paul D. Peacher of Earle, Ark., by a federal grand jury on a charge of violating the federal anti-slavery law is being hailed as a distinct victory by the Southern Tenant Farmers' union.

Peacher is charged with using underhanded methods to get labor for his farm during the cotton choppers' strike last May. The indictment charges that on May 19, he falsely arrested eight Negroes, falsely charged with vagrancy and used force to take them before Mayor T. S. Mitchell at Earle.

The mayor sentenced each to pay $25 fine or to serve 30 days on Peacher's farm. The eight were placed in Peacher's "complete control and custody," the indictment said.

After they had served 20 days, Governor Futrell pardoned them saying that they had been punished enough.

**Bond Set at $5,000**

Mayor Mitchell was absolved of blame by the grand jury as the jurymen felt he had acted innocently.

After his indictment, Peacher was arrested and his bond set at $5,000. His trial was set for November. He refused to comment.

The maximum penalty for violating the anti-slavery law, passed in 1866, is $5,000 fine and five years in prison.

The indictment followed a federal investigation of reports that peonage was being practiced in Arkansas. The probe was demanded by the Southern Tenant Farmers' union which sponsored the cotton choppers' strike last spring.

The investigation was conducted by Fred Isgrig, United States district attorney; Richard P. Shanahan, attorney for the criminal division of the federal bureau of investigation; and Sam E. Whitaker, special assistant in the attorney-general's office in Washington.

"The investigation involved reports of 20 to 25 Negroes railroaded on trumped-up charges," Isgrig said. He announced that he had notified all witnesses appearing before the grand jury to report to him any threat of intimidation as a result of their testimony and that he also had discussed this phase of the case with Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle and A. B. Carter, Crittenden County Deputy Clerk of Court at Earle.

"I notified Mitchell and Carter to go back home and tell the community they had better see that these witnesses are protected," said Isgrig.

**Thorough Investigation Made**

Isgrig said the grand jury had found "no other violation anywhere in Eastern Arkansas of the federal statutes on peonage."

"Thorough investigation by trained men has been made throughout Eastern Arkansas on numerous occasions," he continued. "Every rumor, every witness, every possible hint of peonage has been run down and we cannot find a trace of a law violation.

"We have a statement signed by H. L. Mitchell, secretary of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, saying that he knows of no federal law violations.

"The Peacher case is the only one we could find."

A few hours before the federal grand jury returned its report a Crittenden county grand jury made a report which denied that any peonage in any form was precticed in the county. Miss Willie Sue Blagden, social worker from Memphis, and the Rev. Claude C. Williams of Little Rock, who last June charged that they were beaten in Earle during the cotton choppers' strike, did not testify before the county jury.

Although the jury said that they had been invited to appear, Miss Blagden sent word here that she "would have been glad to go over there and testify."

In its report denying the county jury said:

"It has been charged that humble citizens have been forced to labor by threats, intimidation, guns and illegal process," said the report. "Consequently we have felt it our duty to make an investigation into such alleged law violations and we beg to report that we have not found any evidence of violations of the law in any instance."

Not only is Peacher city marshal of Earle, but he is deputy sheriff of Crittendon county. It was in his district that Frank Weems, Negro sharecropper, disappeared and led to the reports made by the sharecroppers' union that he had been killed. Howard Curlin, sheriff, announced that Weems would be produced "in due time," but the sharecropper has not been produced.

Norfolk, Va., Ledger-Dispatch
December 5, 1936

# Stamping Out Slavery

A Federal jury in Jonesboro, Ark., has struck a vital blow at a barbarous practice which has been condoned by local authorities in many parts of the country. After a brief deliberation it brought in a verdict of guilty on every count against an Arkansas cotton planter charged under the anti-slavery law of 1866 with holding in peonage a group of Negroes whom he—in his convenient capacity as town marshal—had arrested on trumped up charges and who had been put to work on his farm under a contract with the county. To say, as Attorney General Cummings says, that this is "a distinct victory for law and order," is putting the situation all too mildly.

The evidence in this case showed that there was no justification for charges of vagrancy brought against the Negroes. Each was fined $25 and sentenced to thirty days' imprisonment. They were hustled off to the town marshal's farm under the custom in vogue in some sections—particularly in the South—of farming out local prisoners to private industry. Time and again stories of unspeakable brutality to prisoners under these conditions have been told. But, strangely enough, this man was the first to have been indicted under the ancient anti-slavery statute.

"This is not a lone case in Arkansas—it occurs frequently and it ought to be stopped," observed the presiding judge in instructing the jury that in his opinion every circumstance pointed to the guilt of the accused. The result of this verdict not only provides punishment for the act in question but it should serve to direct attention more clearly upon the system which has made this act possible. The practice of binding prisoners out to private individuals or private corporations to work out their punishment makes it possible for unscrupulous persons to use the processes of the law to work unspeakable hardships upon the unfortunates who chance to become their victims. This practice, in which local governments frequently participate, is as un-American as slavery itself, and it ought to be stamped out.

Agriculture - 1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# Tenants And Education

BY GEORGE MORRIS

For 16 years the University of Arkansas has made a scientific study of the problems of farm tenancy. The university is one of the country's foremost state colleges. It ranks above the average in scholarship and physical equipment. Its name is never mentioned in connection with politics. It is operated on the theory that education is the sole function of a state university. Anything emanating from the University of Arkansas bears the stamp of authority.

When Governor Futrell's committee met in Hot Springs to investigate, study and report its recommendations on the farm tenancy situation, one of its first acts was to receive the University of Arkansas report, covering 16 years of intensive study. The sum total of the report is that "the only method of attack on the problem if major disadvantages of the system are to be eliminated is to bring about less tenancy and more ownership for the farmers who cultivate the land." If the committee will accept the report as its own and find a way "to bring about less tenancy and more ownership," the problem will be solved.

The committee might spend months, or even years, and discover nothing that would throw more light on the subject than the report of the university, which was dropped in its lap at the initial meeting. Another 16 years would bring a repetition of what the state university has revealed and the proposed solution would still require the same answer.

It is not necessary to question witnesses and examine documents to certify what everyone already knows. There are some things the committee might take for granted. It might assume, since there is no contrary opinion, that some landowners are generous and some are selfish; that some treat their tenants justly and some unjustly; that some settle with their tenants honestly and some dishonestly.

Some landowners require tenants to cultivate gardens, even when the requirement results in loss of half their tenants; some will not permit tenants to have gardens. Some landowners advance their tenants cash; others require them to trade at the plantation commissary, since they have no credit elsewhere. Some who operate commissaries sell to their tenants at reasonable prices, and some at exorbitant prices. Some share government benefits with tenants, and others take it all. Some divide the proceeds of the crop equally with the sharecropper, and others give them as much as they think would be good for them. Some sell cotton for one price and settle with tenants on a different basis.

Some tenants are thrifty and some are shiftless. Some tenants are dependable and some are not. Some tenants are content to live on the anticipated value of their share of the crop, or less. Some demand more than they can expect to pay, and some with no intention of paying. Some tenants uniformly make a profit and remain from year to year. Some are consistently in debt, move every year and leave the landowner with the bag to hold. Some tenants have pride in their work animals and preserve the implements with which they work. Others will ruin a $250 mule every year and destroy every implement that comes into their hands. Some make their premises attractive and others use fences and porch floors for firewood. Tenants range from mediocre to the lowest form of human intelligence. Those with average intelligence or better become renters and landowners.

R. E. Lee Wilson, who became the world's largest individual cotton farmer and one of Arkansas' finest citizens, began as a tenant farmer. In order that no one may truthfully say opportunity for the sharecropper is limited to the white man of character and intelligence, scores of negro landowners may be cited among the successful and good citizens of Arkansas and other cotton growing states. The issue gets back to the intelligence, industry and ambition of the individual. If he possesses those requisites nothing can keep him down permanently. If he doesn't, the resources of the government can not make him succeed. We do not know of any other occupation in which the same rule does not apply with equal or greater force. The great steel mills of the country have operated many years, grinding out the lives of one generation after another, without any noticeable public demand that each worker should have a little steel mill of his own, financed by the government at a low rate of interest with 60 years to pay for it.

Education of the benighted tenants is the way out for most of those who lack the divine spark of ambition. But education is a long and laborious process. It can not be accomplished instantaneously. Other sections of the country can not understand the financial difficulty imposed upon 75 per cent of the population in supplying educational advantages to the remaining 25 per cent who contribute little or nothing in the way of taxes. But it must not be assumed that Arkansas is not making progress in that respect. Illiteracy in Arkansas was 12.6 per cent in 1910, and 9.4 per cent in 1920 and 6.8 per cent in 1930. The 16.1 per cent negro illiterates belong to the older generation. Adult education has always been a failure. It was attempted in the mountains of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, but educational missionaries from the north were so often mistaken for revenue officers, and met the same fate, that it was abandoned. Progress and the toll of time are the cures of illiteracy. State laws may prevent some of the abuses against the weak, ignorant and defenseless, but the individual will be armed for self-protection by providing education and enlightenment.

President Roosevelt expresses this idea when he says "the tenancy problem in the United States can not be solved overnight. It (government financing) should give tenants who have demonstrated their ability to manage land an opportunity to buy farms on long-time terms at moderate interest rates.'

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The present Department of Justice inquiry is the result of charges by individuals and by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, with headquarters at Memphis, that peonage was rampant in the sharecropper belt.

**Workers "Railroaded" to Work on Farms**

According to United States District Attorney Fred Isgrig, the indictment accuses City Marshall of falsely accusing eight colored men with vagrancy and bringing them before Mayor T. S. Mitchell, where they were illegally convicted and sentenced to work on Peacher's farm for his use and benefit. More than 20 men, the prosecutor added, have been thus railroaded on trumped up charges.

While the federal body conducted its probe, the Crittenden county grand jury at Marion, in the heart of the district under investigation, said it had shifted the charges of forced labor and intimidation, and "had not found any evidence of violations of the law in any instance."

**U. S. Quizzes Nine Field Workers**

Nine colored field hands were among the witnesses called before the federal body and among the others were Mayor Mitchell of Earle, A. B. Carter, deputy clerk of court for Crittenden county, and B. L. Damron, agent with the federal bureau of investigation.

Miss Willie Sue Blagdon, Memphis social worker who has charged that she and Rev. Claude C. Williams, Little Rock minister were flogged at Earle last June, did not testify at the federal hearing, but E. W. White, Crittenden grand jury foreman said that both she and Rev. Williams had been invited to appear "but did not show up." Miss Blagden has filed damage suits in federal court against five Crittenden county men in connection with the alleged flogging.

# THREE SUITS RESULT FROM FARM TROUBLE

## Miss Blagden, Two Negroes Charge Beatings

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The Blagden suit asks $15,000 damages. The other suits were filed by negroes, Eliza Nolden, formerly of Earle, and J. M. Reese of Bolivar County, Miss. Defendants in the first suit are Dulaney, L. L. Barham, Percy Magnus and H. S. Watson. Defendants in the other suit are Dulaney, Magnus, Watson, Barham and Earl Richards.

All defendants today denied that they were guilty of any mistreatment. The negro woman claims she was beaten on June 8 for activities in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. Reese says he was beaten the same day and run out of the county. The assault upon Miss Blagden allegedly occurred June 15.

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# ARKANSANS SUED OVER 3 FLOGGINGS

## Social Worker and 2 Others Beaten in Sharecropper Feud Ask $45,000 Damages.

## CASES IN FEDERAL COURT

### Illinois Governor Refuses to Send Negro Back to Arkansas for Fear of 'Mob Violence.'

JONESBORO, Ark., Aug. 29 (AP).—Three victims of purported floggings in connection with the East Arkansas sharecropper controversy filed damage suits in Federal Court today asking judgments from five Crittenden County residents.

Miss Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis social service worker, instituted suit for $15,000 against five men named in her complaint as Boss Dulaney, Earl Cherry, Ernest Richards, Tony Thompson and Percy Mangus. All denied the charges.

Similar $15,000 suits, naming overlapping defendants, were filed by Eliza Nolden, described by the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union as a 60-year-old Negro woman formerly of Earle, Ark., and now of Memphis, and J. M. Reese, who gave his home address as Boliver County, Miss.

Miss Blagden said five men strapped her last June 15 when she went to Earle with the Rev. Claude C. Williams to investigate the reported death of a Negro sharecropper.

She said the assault made her "sick, sore, lame and bruised," and that her "nervous system was permanently disabled." She also said that she suffered "mental and physical anguish and humiliation." The suit gave no reason for the attack. Mr. Williams said he also was beaten.

**Negro Woman Accuses 5 Men**

The Nolden Woman's suit named H. S. Watson, Boss Dulaney, Percy Mangus and L. L. Barham. She charges that she was seized at Earle on June 8 by Watson, Dulaney and Mangus, taken to a cotton gin and struck with a stick. She also offered no reason for the alleged attack.

Defendants in the Reese action included Mangus, Watson, Dulaney, Earl Richards and Barham. He said that he was assaulted June 8 with sticks and ax handles, taken to a store and searched and then released.

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union sponsored a cotton croppers strike in East Arkansas at the time of the alleged attacks.

Disturbances growing out of the strike resulted in a Federal inquiry in the sharecropper belt. Attorney General Cummings directed Special Assistant George P. Jones to appear before a Little Rock Federal Grand Jury Sept. 21 to present data on alleged violation of peonage laws.

Also convening Sept. 21 is Governor Futrell's honorary Arkansas Tenancy Commission, named to seek a solution of the share-cropper problems.

**Denials of the Defendants**

EARLE, Ark., Aug. 29 (AP).—Defendants in a suit filed in the Federal district court denied today they flogged Willie Sue Blagden.

John "Boss" Dulaney, planter, said that "I never laid one lash on her, and I don't know a thing in the world about it."

Earl Cherry, a deputy sheriff, basketball star for the Earle Cardinals, and bookkeeper for a cotton gin company, said:

"You must be talking to the wrong man. I never had anything to do with the affair."

Ernest Richards, who has a 500-acre plantation north of Earle, declared that "all I know about this affair is what I have seen in the newspapers."

Percy Magnus, describing himself as "just a farmer," denied knowledge of the flogging.

L. L. Barham, planter, said he did not even know Eliza Nolden.

**Negro Escapes Extradition**

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Aug. 29 (AP).—Governor Horner's refusal to authorize Sam Bennett's extradition to Arkansas because of "possible ill treatment" left the Negro share cropper a free man today.

Bennett was charged with assault with intent to kill after a dispute with a plantation overseer. He fled but was arrested in Chicago several months ago. A hearing on a requisition to return him was held, he was freed on bond and recently Governor Horner interviewed him.

In a statement explaining his action last night, Mr. Horner said:

"It was urged at the hearing and by letters and petitions from many individuals and groups that Bennett, if returned to Arkansas, would not be given a fair trial but would be the object of mob violence."

He said that he had received a letter from Governor Futrell of Arkansas assuring him that Bennett would obtain a fair trial and that "his person would be sacred."

"I have every confidence in his (Futrell's) judgment, integrity and ability," the statement added, "but I cannot be convinced that he or any other Governor can control the action of local courts."

**Cites Reports of Violence**

The Governor referred to "reliable reports of flogging and other forms of violence" during the recent organization of sharecroppers in the South."

"Bennett, on the day of the alleged offense, in most intemperate and threatening language, was ordered into the cotton field by J. K. Schaffer, who was overseer of the landlord," said Governor Horner. "He refused because the ground was so wet the hoeing would have been useless."

Then, Governor Horner continued, Schaffer threatened Bennett with a revolver, Bennett obtained a hunting gun and Schaffer went off to seek assistance. Bennett hid in a swamp for several days, the Governor said, before fleeing North.

"Whether Bennett secured his hunting gun to defend himself or as a gesture of defiance," the statement concluded, "it was not an extraditable crime and hardly an assault with intent to kill as charged."

## THE SHARE-CROPPER

The economic condition of the American share-cropper is a problem that has puzzled agricultural leaders for a long period of years. Ever and anon it becomes acute in some section (as in Arkansas within the past year); federal and state authorities do some investigating, hindered or aided by sociological agents from far-off districts; reports are made to somebody, somewhere; statistics are published, theses written, recommendations made—and there the matter ends.

In considering the condition of the southern share-cropper it must be remembered that there are two classes—the worth-while and the no-account. What to do for the worth-while is graphically exemplified in the report of an incident that occurred in Arkansas, not far from the section where Socialists and Communists have been stirring up trouble among the share-croppers. Summing up this report, we learn:

Last winter a plantation in Chicot county was being changed from white to negro labor. Price Boney, white share-cropper, was told to move with his family. He had no place to go and nothing to go with. He called on the district supervisor of the Resettlement Administration at Christmastime, and made application for assistance. The application was approved January 16, and Boney was aided in leasing a 40-acre farm, supplied with two mules and necessary farming tools under a government loan. Terms of the loan required that Boney pay this year only for his subsistence and one-fifth of the money used to buy capital goods.

Early this month the ex-share-cropper paid back the entire government loan of $659.47. He reported that he had bought and paid for a wagon and cultivator, and had 10 acres of long staple cotton still in the field that would be clear profit. He raised feed for his mule and food for the family. He harvested four tons of feedstuff and 400 bushels of corn, despite the drouth. Mr. Boney has put up 350 quarts of fruits and vegetables and 150 pounds of dried beans and peas. Boney's next goal is to own a farm of his own.

The Resettlement Administration is extending aid to worth-while tenants and sharecroppers in several sections of Georgia and other states. It is the first practical demonstration ever put into operation to solve the problem of what to do for the tenant and share-cropper, and is proving its worth in all of the projects undertaken under federal supervision.

The Arkansas illustration is no doubt an outstanding instance; there have been others where beneficiaries of the plan carried their indolence and lack of co-operation to the point where they had to be ousted and denied further federal aid, but these have been in the minority.

The resettlement plan has been established as basically sound, and the supervisors of the various districts have now had a year's experience in their administration. President Roosevelt is so satisfied with the result that he has asked Senator Bankhead to co-operate with other members of congress in formulating a measure along the lines of the one that was before congress last session, to enable the federal government to enlarge the resettlement program to a farm-purchase plan.

Over a period of years such a program would go far in providing for the worth-while tenants and share-croppers. As to the element of no-account share-croppers, the kind who will not respond to aid, the only thing that can be done seems to be to educate their children to understand and appreciate the value of a higher plane of rural existence.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas

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What the landlord does not tell, and what can be seen anywhere in the cotton belt, is that the house, whether a Negro or white lives in it, is nothing but a shack, the water is a pump in the back yard, the lights are oil lamps. The comforts and sanitation of a place that could be called "a home," are left to the imagination, to be realized further down the road where the landlord and managers live.

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"THE PLANTATION OWNERS DO NOT WANT MUCH TO GO INTO THE SHARECROPPER'S STOMACH SO HE CAN GROW BIG AND STRONG."

Still the landlord is not anxious to advance much from the commissary, even though he makes handsome percentages. As one Negro cropper expressed the situation: "The plantation owners do not want much to go into the sharecroppers stomach so he can grow big and strong, because that is a total loss. There will be too much checked against each account, and when the cotton is sold and the accounting made there will be much less for the landlord to take."

From about the middle of July until the cotton is picked in September, the sharecroppers receive no "furnish." During this time he usually does other work for the landlord, such as chopping trees, working at the saw mill, etc. After the crop is in and the settlement reached he gets no "furnish" until time to plant. His share of the crop after the deductions are made, is supposed to carry him over and buy clothes for the family. Usually this period spells starvation because the cropper seldom gets any cash and usually owes the landlord.

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"I hope this investigation will be more fruitful than others ordered by the President."

Thomas sent his telegram to the President after Miss Willie Sue Blagden, 23, of Memphis, told officers she and the Rev. Claude Williams, of Little Rock, were beaten by a band of men when they refused to disclose the name of a man they had gone to Earle to interview in connection with a rumored slaying in a cotton strike.

Greensboro, N. C., News
June 4, 1936

**How to Beget Radicalism.**

**At Earle, Arkansas, yesterday, 35 negro farm hands were arrested when they left their field jobs in response to a strike call of the Southern Tenant Farmers union. According to the newspaper account of the incident, these men had made no show of violence or even of disorderliness. They had just laid down their hoes and quit—and for that they were arrested on a charge of vagrancy.**

**No wonder radical unions flourish in Arkansas. This is treatment which would encourage radicalism. For the police authority to attempt to suppress strikes is as bad as for the strikers to use force in trying to make a strike effective. Neither ought to be allowed, but if one is worse than the other, it is the misuse of the police authority. When rambunctious strikers misbehave, it is on their own responsibility, but when the police exceed themselves it is in the name of their employers the public.—Charlotte News.**

Charlotte, N. C. Observer
June 14, 1936

## Cotton Tenancy 'Slavery'?

"THE WHOLE COTTON tenancy problem cries out to high heaven for far-reaching reconstruction and the abolition of what the authors of the Rosenwald study have referred to as 'the new form of slavery involved in tenancy'," said Rev. Dr. J. S. Myers, industrial secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, after visiting the east Arkansas area where field hands had been on strike and conferring with pastors of the Little Rock churches.

In a statement issued just before he left for his New York office, Dr. Myers said there was evidence of denial of civil liberties and "widespread terrorism" in the east Arkansas share-cropper country.

He said he had interviewed all available sources about the tenant problem and asserted that it was "by no means confined to Arkansas."

He made the trip into east Arkansas to observe conditions under the current strike, called by the Southern Tenant Farmers' union some weeks ago and marked since by demonstrations and numerous arrests. The union is not affiliated with the American Federation.

A Federal investigator's finding of "no peonage" on eastern Arkansas plantations, announced by Governor Futrell, was the latter's answer to Dr. Myers' statement. Governor Futrell Tuesday announced receipt of a telegram from Sam E. Whitaker, special assistant attorney general, who said he found no evidence of peonage in his investigation of the strike zone.

AN EDITORIAL in The Enterprise, a newspaper of Earle, Arkansas, edited and published by Mr. H. M. Phelps, makes as clear as possible the attitude of the land-owning class in the cotton region of that state toward the striking cotton-choppers. It also makes a notable addition to the Southern code of chivalry toward women. After remarking that "there is no sharecroppers' strike in Earle," and that "tenants are all on the job and day laborers are plentiful and glad to work for 75 cents a day instead of $1.50 demanded by the union," the editorial goes on: "It is true that a few foreign agitators representing the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union have felt the strong sting of a backband applied where it would do the most good. This method has produced results where all other remedies less drastic have failed. The greatest hue and cry arises from the fact that a white woman was forced to endure the indignity of a light whipping. Opinions vary as to the wisdom of this act. It is hard for us to condone the action. However, there is no doubt but what the woman was completely out of her place. Assisting in conducting a Negro funeral is no job for a white woman in the South. . . ." Meanwhile the strike of thousands of sharecroppers and day laborers continues under the most heart-breaking conditions of misery and oppression. There has been no further report from Mr. Sam Whitaker, the special investigator from the Department of Justice, who will at most look into violations of federal statutes, presumably leaving untouched violations of state laws: freedom of speech and assemblage, violence, intimidation, etc. These guarantees are the responsibility of the state of Arkansas as set forth in its Constitution.

L. Mitchell, secretary of the S.T.F.U. stopped them. Mitchell got in touch with Governor Futrell and with others who also got in touch with the Governor, who was forced to ask Sheriff Campbell to "please the East," and sent Rangers to escort him to the state border.

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Thomas sent his telegram to the President after Miss Willie Sue Blagden, 23, of Memphis, told officers she and the Rev. Claude Williams, of Little Rock, were beaten by a band of men when they refused to disclose the name of a man they had gone to Earle to interview in connection with a rumored slaying in a cotton strike.

Greensboro, N. C., News
June 4, 1936

**How to Beget Radicalism.**

At Earle, Arkansas, yesterday, 35 negro farm hands were arrested when they left their field jobs in response to a strike call of the Southern Tenant Farmers union. According to the newspaper account of the incident, these men had made no show of violence or even of disorderliness. They had just laid down their hoes and quit—and for that they were arrested on a charge of vagrancy.

No wonder radical unions flourish in Arkansas. This is treatment which would encourage radicalism. For the police authority to attempt to suppress strikes is as bad as for the strikers to use force in trying to make a strike effective. Neither ought to be allowed, but if one is worse than the other, it is the misuse of the police authority. When rambunctious strikers misbehave, it is on their own responsibility, but when the police exceed themselves it is in the name of their employers, the public.—Charlotte News.

Charlotte, N. C. Observer
June 11, 1936

**Cotton Tenancy 'Slavery'?**

"THE WHOLE COTTON tenancy problem cries out to high heaven for far-reaching reconstruction and the abolition of what the authors of the Rosenwald study have referred to as 'the new form of slavery involved in tenancy'," said Rev. Dr. J. S. Myers, industrial secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, after visiting the east Arkansas area where field hands had been on strike and conferring with pastors of the Little Rock churches.

In a statement issued just before he left for his New York office, Dr. Myers said there was evidence of denial of civil liberties and "widespread terrorism" in the east Arkansas share-cropper country.

He said he had interviewed all available sources about the tenant problem and asserted that it was "by no means confined to Arkansas."

He made the trip into east Arkansas to observe conditions under the current strike, called by the Southern Tenant Farmers' union some weeks ago and marked since by demonstrations and numerous arrests. The union is not affiliated with the American Federation.

A Federal investigator's finding of "no peonage" on eastern Arkansas plantations, announced by Governor Futrell, was the latter's answer to Dr. Myers' statement. Governor Futrell Tuesday announced receipt of a telegram from Sam E. Whitaker, special assistant attorney general, who said he found no evidence of peonage in his investigation of the strike zone.

AN EDITORIAL in The Enterprise, a newspaper of Earle, Arkansas, edited and published by Mr. H. M. Phelps, makes as clear as possible the attitude of the land-owning class in the cotton region of that state toward the striking cotton-choppers. It also makes a notable addition to the Southern code of chivalry toward women. After remarking that "there is no sharecroppers' strike in Earle," and that "tenants are all on the job and day laborers are plentiful and glad to work for 75 cents a day instead of $1.50 demanded by the union," the editorial goes on: "It is true that a few foreign agitators representing the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union have felt the strong sting of a backband applied where it would do the most good. This method has produced results where all other remedies less drastic have failed. The greatest hue and cry arises from the fact that a white woman was forced to endure the indignity of a light whipping. Opinions vary as to the wisdom of this act. It is hard for us to condone the action. However, there is no doubt but what the woman was completely out of her place. Assisting in conducting a Negro funeral is no job for a white woman in the South. . . ." Meanwhile the strike of thousands of sharecroppers and day laborers continues under the most heart-breaking conditions of misery and oppression. There has been no further report from Mr. Sam Whitaker, the special investigator from the Department of Justice, who will at most look into violations of federal statutes, presumably leaving untouched violations of state laws: freedom of speech and assemblage, violence, intimidation, etc. These guarantees are the responsibility of the state of Arkansas as set forth in its Constitution.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

Arkansas.

# LOT OF CROPPERS IS "DISHEARTENING" SAYS INVESTIGATOR

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HOT SPRINGS, Ark., Oct.-- (CNA)- "What I saw and learned on that trip would cause you to shed more tears than Christ did at the tomb of Lazarus," W. G. Padgett, white, declared here in commenting on his recent investigation of the sharecropper system in fifteen counties of Arkansas. Padgett was one of the principal witnesses before the Governor's Farm Tenant Commission and a Federal grand jury investigating charges of peonage.

Crusader News Agency

Both inquiries showed the lot of the sharecroppers, black and white alike, was disheartening. 10-5-36 New York, N.Y.

The system, with its peonage and landlord terrorism, has been under indifferent inquiry since last Winter. It first began receiving attention with the flogging at Earle, Ark., of Miss Willie Sue Blagden, a white Memphis social worker, and the Rev. Claude V. Williams, also white. They were whipped when they went to Earle to conduct the funeral of a Negro victim of planters' violence. Authorities declared that the man had not been murdered and promised to produce him in "due time." That was last June. The victim has not yet been produced.

## Union Submits Report

Following nation-wide protests of the floggings, the United States Government ordered an investigation, and Gov. J. M. Futrell also appointed the Arkansas Farm Tenant Commission to make an inquiry into the lot of the sharecroppers and laborers. The Governor refused the request of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union that some bonafide sharecroppers be appointed to the commission. A request by the Union that it be allowed to have a representative at the hearings was also rejevted by the Governor.

The Union last week submitted a 27-page report to the Governor's Commission on the evils of the system with the request that the Commissioners "make known to your fellow countrymen the exact nature of the tyranny, the terror, the injustice, the brutality, the hunger for food, clothes, jobs, homes, lands and freedom that exist among the unfortunate victims of a system that has broken down and in so doing has condemned literally thousands of innocent men, women and children to a condition often more humiliating, debasing and cruel than chattel slavery itself. You may reveal the true nature of the situation or you can whitewash it as others have done before you."

## Worse Than Slavery

The Unions report describes the conditions of the sharecroppers as even worse than that of the slaves during chattel slavery:

"The system of tenantry known as sharecropping is an outgrowth of chattel slavery. Following the war between the states, the Negro slaves were given their 'freedom' as a military measure. Without any means of earning a livelihood the millions of theoretically 'free' Negroes were forced to return to their former masters on the masters' own terms. Sharing the crop was possibly an inevitable solution to the problem that faced the South seventy-five years ago. That necessity no longer exists but the sustemcontinues to blight the economy of a whole region.

"As the system exists today it combines the worst features of 18th century feudalism and 20th century finance capitalism. Asa result literally thousands of workers on some of the large plantations in the deep South are in a more hapless condition than their forbears. They have none of the guarantees of chattel slaves, in that the landlord assumes no real responsibility for their welfare. Such a condition works to the economic and social disadvantage of the entire citizenry. While a few individuals may reap a large financial reward by the vicious exploitation of the cotton field workers, the small business man and merchant, and in fact the majority of the people of the state, are penalized for this situation. There can be no security, economic or social, as long as a large portion of the population is held in virtual peonage."

The union denies that the problem is primarily one of color. "Most of the trouble arising between the races is directly rooted in the problem of bread and jobs and economic security. It is not primarily a problem of color. On many occasions planters, frequently assisted by officers of the law, have done their utmost to stir up racial strife between these two equally exploited racial groups."

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Agriculture - 1936 - Labor Condition 7-27-36

~~Ku Klux Klan - 1936~~

Arkansas.

# ARKANSAS MAY CALL OUT TROOPS IN FARM WARFARE

Birmingham Post

### Investigation Of Girl's And Minister's Flogging May Result In Mobilization Of State's National Guardsmen

Birmingham, Ala

### SEVERAL' ARRESTS ARE PREDICTED

6-17-36

### Planters Are Accused By Victims Who Say Beating Was Administered Because Of Demands For Increased Daily Wage

*By United Press.*

EARLE, Ark., June 17.—Threatened with a martial law proclamation, Sheriff Howard Curlin said today he "might make some arrests" of men who flogged a girl social worker, a Presbyterian minister and another man for aiding striking cotton plantation workers.

Gov. J. M. Futrell, who mobilized National Guardsmen to suppress strike violence near Forrest City, Ark., recently, indicated that he might declare martial law, in a statement pointing out that he could not investigate the floggings without it.

Sheriff Curlin announced later that he would go to Little Rock, the capital, today.

"There might be some arrests later," he said.

The flogged girl and the minister, who said six men forced them onto a train for Memphis after they were beaten at an isolated spot on the river bank with a brass-studded harness strap, appealed to Atty.-Gen. Homer S. Cummings through the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union for Federal intervention.

**Higher Wages Sought**

Miss Willie Sue Blagden, 28, and the minister, the Rev. Claude Williams, who was Socialist candidate for governor in 1932, said their assailants were planters opposing cotton choppers' demands for a $1.25 daily wage and union recognition.

"I'd know them, and I'll go back to testify if they're arrested," Miss Blagden said.

Williams was lashed 14 times and Miss Blagden five. Physicians who examined her when she reached Memphis found welts five inches wide across her thighs and hips.

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"That was a mock funeral deliberately planned by Mitchell and his confederates as propaganda," Governor Futrell said.

The Sheriff told the Governor that 'the only trouble we have in Crittenden County is from a bunch of foreign agitators who are there interfering."

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Curlin said that he had received no formal complaint of Weems's reported death or the alleged flogging of three persons who went to Earle, Ark., in what they said was an effort to determine if the Negro was dead.

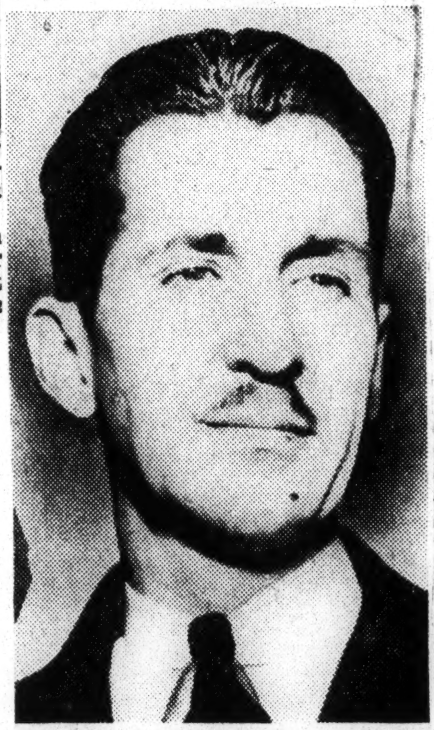
"All I know about the death and floggings is what the newspapers carried," said the Sheriff.

Reported victims of the floggings were the Rev. Claude Williams, 41, Little Rock Presbyterian minister; Miss Willie Sue Blagden, 29, former social service worker of Memphis, and Roy Morelock, 35, sharecropper.

Mr. Williams, fined $100 and sentenced to ninety days in jail last year in a Fort Smith relief workers' strike, left his Little Rock home last night for either Mississippi or Tennessee.

The minister contemplated no formal complaints in connection with the whipping he said he received.

**SAY THEY WERE FLOGGED**



Times Wide World Photo.

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Agriculture - 1936 - Labor Condition
7-27-36
~~Ku Klux Klan - 1936~~

Arkansas.

# ARKANSAS MAY CALL OUT TROOPS IN FARM WARFARE

Birmingham Post

## Investigation Of Girl's And Minister's Flogging May Result In Mobilization Of State's National Guardsmen

Birmingham, Ala

## 'SEVERAL' ARRESTS ARE PREDICTED

6-17-36

### Planters Are Accused By Victims Who Say Beating Was Administered Because Of Demands For Increased Daily Wage

*By United Press.*

EARLE, Ark., June 17.—Threatened with a martial law proclamation, Sheriff Howard Curlin said today he "might make some arrests" of men who flogged a girl social worker, a Presbyterian minister and another man for aiding striking cotton plantation workers.

Gov. J. M. Futrell, who mobilized National Guardsmen to suppress strike violence near Forrest City, Ark., recently, indicated that he might declare martial law, in a statement pointing out that he could not investigate the floggings without it.

Sheriff Curlin announced later that he would go to Little Rock, the capital, today.

"There might be some arrests later," he said.

The flogged girl and the minister, who said six men forced them onto a train for Memphis after they were beaten at an isolated spot on the river bank with a brass-studded harness strap, appealed to Atty.-Gen. Homer S. Cummings through the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union for Federal intervention.

**Higher Wages Sought**

Miss Willie Sue Blagden, 28, and the minister, the Rev. Claude Williams, who was Socialist candidate for governor in 1932, said their assailants were planters opposing cotton choppers' demands for a $1.25 daily wage and union recognition.

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The "body" still was missing today. Earle authorities persistently denied Weems had been killed and Miss Bagden said today she didn't believe now that he was dead but that he was hiding for safety.

Miss Bagden showed newspapermen large blue marks on her left leg, made, she charged, by four lashes from a large leather strap. She said Williams was more severely beaten than she. "I counted 16 lashes they gave him," she added.

# Planters Flog Fourth Victim

## Reign of Terrorism in Arkansas Is Told by Writer's Son

MEMPHIS, Tenn., June 18.—A fourth victim of floggers in the Arkansas tenant farmers strike area arrived here today, exhibited bruises and charged that a reign of planters' terrorism prevailed in Earle, Ark.

Frank Rawlinson, 30, the son of Frank J. Rawlinson, writer, editor, and missionary in Shanghai, asserted he was seized in Earle and whipped at about the same time protests were being made over the previous beating of Willie Sue Blagden, 29, member of a prominent Memphis family, and the Rev. Claude C. Williams, a Presbyterian minister.

Shortly before Rawlinson's arrival, Roy Morelock, courier for the union was first arrested by the deputized plantation owner J. D. Peacher then turned over by him to a gang which beat up Morelock with "a small sledge hammer" and with their fists.

All these recent floggings were the result of the attempt to discover the whereabouts of the body of Frank Weems, who the union charge was beaten to death last week on the picket line by plantation owners' agents.

**Miss Blagden to File Charges**

Rawlinson said he was not connected with any union or organization, but spent three days in Earle to "study the labor situation." He said he was ordered out of town Tuesday and was leaving when he was picked up on the road by four men and whipped with a heavy strap.

Sheriff Howard Curlin of Crittenden County said there was no record of the incident.

Miss Blagden, Memphis socialworker, who was whipped by six Earlemen, said she would return to Earle, identify the six men who beat her and file formal charges against them.

In Memphis, five attorneys retained by the Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, ordered a conference tomorrow to determine procedure.

**Investigation Asked**

John D. Rust, co-inventor of the Rust cotton picking machine, asked President Roosevelt by letter to launch a Federal investigation.

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The Reverend Williams, who is vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers, and a representative of the National Religion and Labor Federation, was to conduct the services. He said he and Miss Bagden went over yesterday in an effort to locate the "body."

The "body" still was missing today. Earle authorities persistently denied Weems had been killed and Miss Bagden said today she didn't believe now that he was dead but that he was hiding for safety.

Miss Bagden showed newspapermen large blue marks on her left leg, made, she charged, by four lashes from a large leather strap. She said Williams was more severely beaten than she. "I counted 16 lashes they gave him," she added.

# Planters Flog Fourth Victim

6-19-36

## Reign of Terrorism in Arkansas Is Told by Writer's Son

MEMPHIS, Tenn., June 18.—A fourth victim of floggers in the Arkansas tenant farmers strike area arrived here today, exhibited bruises and charged that a reign of planters' terrorism prevailed in Earle, Ark.

Frank Rawlinson, 30, the son of Frank J. Rawlinson, writer, editor, and missionary in Shanghai, asserted he was seized in Earle and whipped at about the same time protests were being made over the previous beating of Willie Sue Blagden, 28, member of a prominent Memphis family, and the Rev. Claude C. Williams, a Presbyterian minister.

Shortly before Rawlinson's arrival, Roy Morelock, courier for the union was first arrested by the deputized plantation owner J. D. Peacher then turned over by him to a gang which beat up Morelock with "a small sledge hammer" and with their fists.

All these recent floggings were the result of the attempt to discover the whereabouts of the body of Frank Weems, who the union charge was beaten to death last week on the picket line by plantation owners' agents.

**Miss Blagden to File Charges**

Rawlinson said he was not connected with any union or organization, but spent three days in Earle to "study the labor situation." He said he was ordered out of town Tuesday and was leaving when he was picked up on the road by four men and whipped with a heavy strap.

Sheriff Howard Curlin, of Crittenden County said there was no record of the incident.

Miss Blagden, Memphis social worker, who was whipped by six men, said she would return to Earle to identify the six men who beat her and file formal charges against them.

**Investigation Asked**

John D. Rust, co-inventor of the Rust cotton picking machine, asked President Roosevelt by letter to launch a Federal investigation.

In Memphis, five attorneys retained by the Civil Liberties Union and the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, ordered a conference tomorrow to determine procedure.

Arkansas.

Agriculture - 1936
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## Slavery Seventy Years After

Christian Century

CHARGES of peonage in Arkansas, frequently made during recent months, have now been confirmed by a federal court in the conviction of Paul D. Preacher, marshal of the town of Earle, for violation of the Anti-Slavery Act of 1866. The jury, instructed by the court, found the marshal guilty of illegally arresting a group of Negroes and of forcing them to work on his farm, and a sentence of two years' imprisonment with a fine of thirty-five hundred dollars was imposed. That slavery in some form has persisted in the South will not surprise anyone who is familiar either with actual conditions in sections of it or with social processes in general. Slavery was too integral a part of the social life of the South and too vital to the interests of certain classes to be suddenly eliminated by a mere constitutional amendment, although the amendment did make necessary the finding of new ways of perpetuating the Negro's enslavement. The complete emancipation of the Negro, merely begun by a law passed seventy years ago, depends upon factors much more concrete—changes in the total social and economic life of the area. The conviction of Preacher is an encouraging indication that these changes are taking place. There has been an Anti-Slavery Act since 1866, but it was not till 1936 that an indictment, not to speak of a conviction, under the law has been secured. In other words, the significant thing about Preacher's case is not that he was guilty, but that he was convicted or even brought to trial. It is worth noting, however, that it was officers of the federal government who prosecuted the case and a federal judge who instructed a somewhat hesitant jury to convict and who pronounced sentence. Now, as in 1866, the federal government, not because of superior virtue but because of greater detachment, is in a position to point the way. Here is support for the contention that the final abolition of lynching probably waits for federal strengthening of local and state efforts to deal with that crime. *P.S.* Did we not send someone several years ago to help the League of Nations investigate perfectly incredible charges of enforced labor in Liberia? As we recall, our representative on that commission of the league was a southern Negro.

## *Peonage In Arkansas*

THAT was a salutary case in Arkansas, where a town officer was convicted in Federal Court for the foul crime of arresting men, having them convicted, and then sentenced to his farm to work out their punishment under conditions which the government properly determined was slavery and promptly took action to wipe out in the locality where it came to light. The pity is that the mopping up process is not more frequent and widespread. Few of the states in which slavery was legal, until a war ended it, are without peonage and worse.

A good many people will be surprised at this assertion and some will readily question its accuracy, but they should not be so cocksure. The rudeness with which their complacency must have been shattered by the news of a prominent white citizen and peace officer's conviction for such an offense must have been sharp.

That such prosecutions are not more frequent is the shocking thing. There have been and are cases within an hour's ride of Norfolk that are essentially as bad, although pretty difficult to uncover and prove to a court's satisfaction. In many, economic necessity is the greatest aid to those perpetuating peonage. There may not be this "farming out" of prisoners such as in Arkansas, but anyone who knows of the conditions of sharecropping and tenant farming knows the other means by which virtual slavery exists.

Too many of our officials, including even governors, take an ostrich viewpoint on these conditions preferring to close their eyes to them and lay the blame for attempted exposures to "outside agitators." Flaying of agitators is not an answer, if the agitators tell the truth. The shame is on these states that outside agitators, as they choose to call them must bare the conditions. It may be humiliating to have PEACHER cases, as Arkansas did, but it is humane to deal with them with vigor and promptness Perhaps the states will become more active as the federal government and its courts demonstrate more consistently that they will strike "even though the state be inert or impotent," as the *Arkansas Gazette* stated editorially.

An encouraging aspect of the situation is the frankness with which influential newspapers, great educational institutions, and socially minded individuals are acknowledging the problem and creating a public opinion which may in time eliminate it. Take the University of Virginia, for instance, which in its monthly "*News Letter*" asserts: "The tenant question in general and the sharecropper troubles of the South in particular have been brought to the attention of the people of the nation as a vital and perplexing problem which merits a great deal of consideration both from leaders in agriculture and the leaders of government in Washington. . . And yet no enough has been said or done."

These columns have repeatedly pointed out the often overlooked fact that the problem is not a Negro problem, but one affecting both races and the general welfare—because most of those suffering the general effects of the system at fault are *not* Negroes. On this point the university's "*News Letter*" states: "A popular fallacy is that most southern tenants are Negroes. While it is true that Negroes comprise one-half of all croppers in the sixteen southern states less than 700,000 of the 1,800,000 tenants reported in the 1930 census were Negroes."

The author of the "*News Letter's*" sharecropping article, W. G. POINDEXTER, says most pertinently: "If the South is to do something to its own positive good in the matter of curbing the growth of the tenant system and of restoring and maintaining the farm workers' standard of living to the level of their brothers' in industry, the South's leaders must pursue the problem of tenancy to its solution."

## Slaveholder Drop Appeal; Will Pay Fine of $3,500

JONESBORO, Ark., (ANP) — After declaring some days ago they would appeal the case because Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earl, could not raise the money to pay his $3,500 fine, attorneys for Peacher declared December 10 he had changed his mind and would pay.

Peacher was convicted in federal court November 25 of enslaving eight Negroes and in addition to his fine drew a two-year sentence. The court announced it would place Peacher on probation if he paid the $3,500.

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THE ARKANSAS GAZETTE, LITTLE ROCK, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1936

## UNIQUE SYSTEM OF JUSTICE AT EARLE DETAILED NEGROES FORCED TO WORK FOR PEACHER

**By Inez Hale, MacDuff.**
**(Staff Correspondent of the Gazette.)**

Jonesboro, Nov. 24.—The ancient and elemental right of an accused person to fair trial, rooted in English common law, rose in relief here today against the simple, human background of a story of primitive, childlike people and their way of living among spreading cotton fields and towering forests of a fertile eastern Arkansas lowland of the delta country.

Trial in federal court of Paul D. Peacher, town marshal of Earle, who is accused of falsely arresting eight Negroes and holding them in servitude on land that he was clearing under contract, resolved itself into presentation by government and defense witnesses of conflicting evidence as to events taking place in the jail and nearby office of the mayor of Earle on the morning of May 20.

**Peacher Defends Sentences Imposed by Mayor Mitchell.**

Peacher, called as the last witness in his own defense, testified that trial of the eight Negroes was conducted before Mayor T. S. Mitchell of Earle, who presided as a justice of the peace. He said that it was conducted in the same manner "as any other court trial," and that each Negro was tried separately on a vagrancy charge, with the entire procedure taking about an hour and a half. He declared that he was sworn in by Mitchell as the prosecuting witness in the presence of the Negroes.

Mitchell, recalled as a government witness late this afternoon, said that the trial was completed in a few minutes, that he does not recall having put Peacher under oath, and that he relied solely on Peacher's testimony in convicting and sentencing the Negroes. No one was present except Mitchell Peacher and the Negroes.

Seven of the Negroes previously had given similar testimony as to conduct of the trial before Mayor Mitchell. They said that they were taken from the jail into the mayor's office and asked whether they wanted to plead guilty.

Mose Dunn said that he first offered to plead guilty because he "wanted to get a low term and get out and go back home," but that he hastily withdrew his plea when Mayor Mitchell started to fine him $25 and sentence him to 30 days at hard labor. Several others said they were taken back to jail when they asked for a trial, but that they were returned to the mayor's office almost immediately by Peacher and sentenced to serve 30 days on the "sixteenth section," a tract of land that Peacher was clearing.

The government contends that Peacher used his office as town marshal for personal profit and gain by arresting the Negroes on spurious charges of vagrancy and having them committed to his custody to work out their fines, although no written contract for use of leased convict labor had been made between Peacher and Crittenden county officials.

Preacher denied that there was anything irregular about the transaction and said a verbal agreement was made with the county through Sheriff Howard Curlin, under whom he had served as a deputy for use of the prisoners. No payment ever was made to the county for the 17 days labor of the men, he said, "because the agreement was not carried out," The Negroes were pardoned by Governor Futrell and liberated as soon as the circumstances were brought to his attention after the men had served 17 days of the 30-day sentence.

**Witnesses Describe Economic Conditions at Earle.**

But far more than the story of a single morning's events in the small, cramped "calaboose" of a country town centering a farming community, and far more than the status of a few men as vagrants or as day laborers was told in the slowly unfolded tale that came, sentence by sentence, from the lips of 14 government witnesses and five called to testify for the defense.

Delineated more deeply hour by hour behind the mass of oral evidence brought out in the ponderous, unwieldy methods of court procedure there grew a word picture that overshadowed the long file of witnesses who came and went quietly from the single chair where they sat to face the jury.

It was a picture of a fertile, sparsely settled farming country gripped by the stress of a changing national economy. It was a picture of shifting prices for cotton and lumber, of mills that shut down when no one built houses, of compresses that were silent and fields that lay idle when cotton wasn't worth much. Restlessness and dissatisfaction, to some extent appeared in testimony of employe and employer, but for the most part conditions were accepted as they were and endured for lack of a better solution.

**Arrested Negroes Shown As Being Willing to Work.**

There were the Negroes who chopped cotton, picked cotton, cleared "new ground," did "sawmilling," chopped corn, "run the 'ekalizer" at the compress whenever they could "catch a day."

There was L. J. Machen, white mill operator of Earle, who formerly had two mills but had been "shut down" a lot since the beginning of the depression. He ran the mill only when he had orders for lumber, but he testified that one of the Negroes arrested for vagrancy had worked for him whenever he was needed since 1916, and that he was a good worker.

There was Ike Coates, Negro farmer who hired one of the arrested Negroes on a part-time basis to help with work on land that he rented. There was Bill Stephens, Negro foreman for J. O. Anderson, white plantation operator, who said that he paid one of the accused Negroes $3.75 for five day work during the week before the arrest of the group by Peacher.

There was Mark Love, 42, Negro who has "followed day labor" at Earle since 1934, who works at "whatsomever I can get to do whensomever I can find something." He said that he was "fixing to go to work when Mistuh Peachers come along and told me to get in his car."

**Slipshod Methods Of Crittenden Officials Revealed.**

There was another picture revealing possible laxity in business methods of county officials. Deputy County Clerk A. B. Carter of Crittenden County testified that bonds filed by Peacher to insure payment to the county for use of convict labor bore no date because they were mislaid in the office and forgotten for some time, and the person who had received them could not remember when they were filed.

The government charges that the bonds, which name individually the Negroes involved in the arrests were filed after government investigation into the case had begun.

Crittenden County Judge J. C. Johnson testified that contracts for use of county prisoners under the convict leasing system were verbal and that many other transactions made by him in an official capacity were on a verbal basis.

**Negroes Have No Admiration For White Man's System**

Strongly marked in the undercurrent of the day's proceedings was the baffling, impalpable question of racial psychology which every listener recognizes and no one ever is quite able to put in words. During the morning session, when a succession of Negro witnesses appeared the audience was silenced more than once by baliffs when laughter followed some revealing comment of a Negro witness who worked, he said, when he could get anything to do, but liked to sit around in the sun at home or work his "little gyarden." Obviously and frankly, the white man's standard of working all the time is not admired by some of the Negroes.

**Justice the Only Issue, Rules Judge Martineau.**

Efforts of Peacher's lawyers to show that there was a great demand for labor in Crittenden county last spring and that many Negroes who lived in the "quarters" in Earle "south of the railroad tracks" were idle, were ruled out by Judge Martineau.

"It wouldn't make any difference if everybody in Arkansas needed help," he said. "Violation of the law is not justified by the need for labor, and excess of idle labor, even if proved, would have no bearing on the question here. This jury is not called on to try the guilt or innocence of these men as vagrants. The question at issue here is whether or not they received a fair trial when they were arrested and convicted on the vagrancy charge and whether Peacher arrested them and took them to court for the purpose of securing their services illegally."

**Peacher, on Witness Stand Defends His Actions.**

Peacher, called to the stand late this afternoon, testified that he had been marshal since 1930, that he had known the Negroes whom he arrested for a number of years, that all habitually loafed about the streets and frequented gambling joints and "honkytonks."

He denied that he cursed the Negroes when he brought them into Mayor Mitchell's office.

Testimony of the Negroes that they were not fed by Peacher during the 48 hours that they remained in jail was denied by the mar-

shal, who said that he sent food from a restaurant to them in addition to food which their relatives supplied.

He also said that they were well cared for at the stockade on the tract that he was clearing, and that a doctor attended two of them during that time. The Negroes were not held there under armed guard, he said. "Some of them got away, and we didn't try to get them back," he continued. "All of them could walk off if they wanted to. I was glad to get rid of them."

Peacher said that two of the Negroes came to Earle on short furloughs while they were in his custody. He said that J. B. Dulaney, chairman of the board of Earle Special School District, came to him last February with a proposition to clear land belonging to district in the Sixteenth section in return for wood and for use of the land for two years. He said that subsequently he arranged for use of convict labor with County Judge Johnson through Sheriff Howard Curlin. Both Curlin and Johnson had given similar testimony.

"The jail was filled up most of the time with prisoners, and the city and county had to feed them," Peacher said, "If there wasn't any other way I had to feed them out of my own pocket. We figured we had better get them to work."

Asked by government lawyers why he had not arrested the accused Negroes for gambling, which he charges was their principal occupation, Peacher replied: "We don't arrest anybody for gambling over in our country."

He said the Negroes were searched when they were put in jail, and that none had money. All had testified that they had money when arrested.

Warrants for arrest of the Negroes were not secured until the day after they were arrested and jailed, he said. The Negroes knew their rights in court at the trial before Mayor Mitchell, Peacher said, but did not offer evidence.

Peacher's demeanor in the courtroom was confident, and he frequently appeared amused. On the witness stand he was defiant and arrogant, particularly under cross-examination.

**Others Testify in Support Of Peachers' Story.**

Everett Hood, deputy sheriff of Crittenden county, testified that he had been in Earle almost daily for the past six years and that all of the Negroes were habitual loafers, but under cross-examination admitted that he had known some of them only a short time.

Dulaney, chairman of the School Board, who farms between 1,200 and 11,500 acres of rented land, identified a lease contract between the School Board and Peacher dated May 5, shortly before arrest of the eight Negroes, giving Peacher all timber and use of the land for two years in return for clearing it. He said that the school district financed construction of a stockade and two other buildings on the land immediately afterward. Efforts to introduce testimony as to the impoverished condition of the school district and need for funds were overruled.

John Clay, Negro, who worked at the "Sixteenth Section" during construction of the buildings, testified that the last one was finished a few days before the arrests for vagrancy.

Aubrey Lancaster, living near Earle, said that he told Peacher that if he "would get the loafers off the streets people on the farms can get some work done," and added that others had told Peacher the same.

**All Arrested Negroes Deny They Were Vagrants.**

The government did not present evidence supporting one count of the indictment relating to arrest of a Negro named Wesley Millender. Negroes named in the other seven counts and called as witnesses today were Wingfield Anderson, 51; John Curtis, 22; Powell Willis, 22; Moses Dunn, 52; Charles Dean, 62; Lewis Fredick, 36 and Mark Love, 42.

Anderson testified that Peacher took him from the porch of his home in Earle. He said that he had been drawing workmen's compensation of $10 per week from the Natalbany Lumber Company of Baton Rouge, La., for some months pending final settlement for damages for an injury received while in the employ of the concern, and that $1,700 settlement was made.

Ashton L. Stewart, Baton Rouge lawyers, who represented Anderson in a suit against the company, corrobrated this and produced receipts for funds sent Anderson shortly before and after his arrest by Peacher.

The other six Negroes testified that they were working at the time of their arrest or had been working, and all said that they had some funds, had food in the houses where they lived, and were not in danger of becoming public charges.

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California

# California Cotton Choppers Protest Recent Wage Cut

BAKERSFIELD, Calif., May 8—Citizens of both Races in Kern county, who are members of the Allied Workers' club, have launched a vigorous protest against the new wage cut which was recently made by the San Joaquin Valley Cotton Growers' Association. None of the workers was represented when the wage cut was made.

The workers are now getting only 20 cents an hour or 75 cents per acre for clear fields for cotton chopping. The Allied Workers' club is demanding 40 cents an hour as a minimum wage. The workers have sent out a stirring appeal for an investigation. Protests were made of the recent discrimination in laying off some Race workers

Florida

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# Whitewash Hovers Over Now Famous Peonage Case

Courier 11-28-36
Pittsburgh, Pa.

## Officials Postpone Action In Trial of Four White Men Jailed For Forcing Negroes to Work At Point of Gun.

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., Nov. 25—Whitewash seemed to be in the air in Florida's now-famous peonage case as officials postponed action in the cases of the four white men jailed for forcing two Negroes to work on their turpentine plantations at the point of a gun. A federal official promised a decision by next week, while the defense for the slave-drivers argued that there was insufficient evidence for a conviction.

11-28-36

The case came into national prominence last week when two Negroes escaped from the brutal slave-farm and were forced to return. Another white man is believed to have informed the authorities of the conditions.

The wives of the men were removed from the section this week to avoid harm to them from the friends of the four arrested white men, two of whom are said to practically "own" the little town of Macclenny, where the turpentine plantation was located. Other employes of the place told pitiful tales of the brutal methods used to force them to work for 50 cents a day.

## Four Held For Peonage In Florida

Philadelphia Informer
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Washington, Nov. 2_—An investigation of forced labor in Florida by the Department of Justice resulted in the holding of four managers of a turptine mill in that state for peonage last week.

11-21-36

The Department of Justice was forced to make the investigation after persistent agitation by NAACP, the Southern Tennant Farmers Union and other liberal and labor groups.

11-21-36

On Oct. 14, Arthur Smith and Ed Baker, colored, attempted to leave employ of William Knabb, white owner of the mill. The men were paid only a few cents a day for their work. They felt they could get more money and better conditions elsewhere.

Jay Informer

They were detained at the point of a gun by Knabb, however, "because of an alleged debt they owed."

St. Petersburg, Fla.

Later, threats against the men were made by Knabb and his son Earl and Fred Jones and Edward Hall, all of whom were powerful in the councils of the local KuKlux Klan.

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General

ST. PAUL, MINN.
**PIONEER-PRESS**

MAR 19 1936

### Cotton Pickers.

Two Tennessee brothers, inventors of a successful cotton picking machine, have discovered that they have perfected their device at the wrong time to make any money out of it. Eight years ago when they began their work they had every reason to hope that it would find a ready market. But today it is viewed askance because it can pick in a day an amount of cotton representing the work of from 50 to 100 men who would be thrown out of jobs. Accordingly they have offered to introduce their invention on a socialized basis without profit to themselves. They suggest Federal or state sponsorship for a plan to put their pickers into the fields, the earnings to be used to administer social insurance for the disabled and aged together with a program of rural industrialization and diversification to take up the slack created by the machine.

Inventors have been pegging away at mechanical pickers for several years and some practical types have been developed. But even before unemployment became a matter of national concern, it prevented the sale of the machines. Just before the depression began to bite in, a St. Louis company brought out a compact and highly efficient suction picker with which two men could do the work of five. Planters would not buy because it would deprive their Negro pickers of their chief source of income and what was saved on picking would have to be spent for private or public relief. Beside this the whole structure of retail trade in cotton districts would be disorganized for the year's bills were commonly squared by the colored population at cotton picking time.

So long as the work can be done more cheaply and quickly by machines, hand picking is a sort of boondoggling that antedates the depression. Eventually the machine must come into use for it is economic waste not to use it. Foreign competition in cotton promises to emphasize that waste so that the genuine economy of providing alternative employments for displaced hand pickers will be convincingly recognized.

## Sharecroppers Answer

Daily Worker 3-30-36

"THE system is rotten and that's what we want to change."

Thus spoke an Alabama Negro farmer before a conference of government officials Saturday in Washington. He and a number of other Negro and white sharecroppers and tenant-farmers were getting the Roosevelt New Dealers "told" about the starvation and misery in Southern farm areas. New York, N.Y.

Incidentally, Gov. J. M. Futrell, of Arkansas, says all this talk about the South's farm situation is "much ado about nothing"—a neat phrase for disposing of jobless, evicted poor farmers.

But the victims of the "situation" said differently. They exposed the system of landlord terror and violence to smash such organizations as the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the Sharecroppers Union; how the landlords have their government-inspired union for driving down the wages and living standards of the agricultural workers; how the poor farmers bear the burden of the plow-under-cotton policy while their families have no bedsheets, no clothing for their children, sick or well.

The only "answer" that the Resettlement Administration had to offer was that "there will be a permanent relief program in the South for some time to come."

But the answer of the tenant farmers and sharecroppers is strengthening their unions, supporting the Frazier-Lundeen bill, and building a Farmer-Labor Party.

### TENANT UNREST

Advertiser, Montgomery, Ala.

Outcroppings of unrest, strikes and rioting among sharecroppers and tenants in Arkansas may or may not be serious. One thing is certain, however. Tenant and sharecropper organizations are not going to get anywhere by following the usual method of striking for higher wages and less work.

The fundamental question is not one of landlords and employers getting more than their share. There just is not enough to divide.

The Advertiser is convinced that there is not a tenant in Alabama, who if given the entire proceeds from his labor and required to pay all expenses, including taxes, upkeep and six per cent interest, would be able to make a decent living. In fact nine out of ten would not receive any more than they do under present circumstances.

It is not the landlords or the employers that are at the base of the tenants' and sharecroppers' problem—it's the system.

As long as tenants and sharecroppers exert their energies in striking for higher wages they will receive for their troubles only public disapproval. They should be striving to bring about lawful and legal readjustments to the present system.

Nothing can be gained by demanding a larger portion of present farm incomes. Furthermore, it would be foolish to attempt to raise enough cotton to increase the income of both landlords and tenants. Even if the cotton could be grown, it could not be sold.

Passage of the Bankhead-Jones bill and a modest homestead tax exemption in the cotton States would do more to benefit the small farmer, the tenant and the sharecropper, than a thousand strikes for higher wages and less work.

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General

### THE TENANT PROBLEM

Addressing the Southern Newspaper Publishers' Association at its recent meeting in Asheville, Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant administrator of the Federal Resettlement Administration, declared that the south's tenant problem makes it a "seedbed for social unrest" and that without some stabilizing change may lead to violence in the future. Emphasizing this point, Dr. Alexander said:

This tenant class—white and black—are the kind of people to whom extreme radicals appeal. Huey Long is dead, but conditions that produced him remain. His strength was in appeal to this group and on their backs he rode to power. There will be other Huey Longs tomorrow and in the years to come.

The tenant-cropper problem has been growing with the years; society has observed this growth, and from time to time has discussed it, but with no resulting action. The present administration has done more than discuss it; action to better the condition of tenants and croppers is a part of the New Deal, and some progress has been made, despite strenuous opposition.

Wholesale rehabilitation of the nation's tenants and croppers is an impossibility, not only on account of the money outlay that would be involved, but because an unknown number must be trained in the matter of thrift and dependability to avoid waste of time and money on the part of the government.

The government's resettlement program calls for aiding those whose character and ability indicate that, having been helped a certain distance on the road to independence, they will be able to travel alone. The resettlement program was put into operation as an experiment, with the purpose of proceeding slowly and by experience learning the best methods to pursue.

There is a possibility that the future will see the enactment of some such law as the Bankhead measure, with which the Resettlement Administration may make more rapid progress.

Hamstringing the movement by depriving it of needed funds would act to terminate the only real move that has ever been made to better the condition of the tenants and croppers.

Fayetteville, N. C., Observer
May 19, 1936

# SOUTH HAS SEED BED FOR UNREST, SPEAKER THINKS

## Publishers Told of Condition of Landless Population in South

## SERIOUS PROBLEM

## Says Tenant Farmers Will Turn to Violence in the Future

ASHEVILLE, May 19 (AP)—Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant administrator of the federal resettlement administration, told members of the Southern Newspapers Publishers association here today that the "condition of landless population makes the south a seed bed for social unrest."

"Huey Long is dead," he said, "but conditions that produced him remain. His strength was in appeal to this group and on their backs he rode to power. There will be other Huey Longs tomorrow and in the years to come.

"This tenant class—white and black—are the kind of people to whom extreme radicals appeal and unless something can be done to stabilize this condition, somewhere in the future they will turn to violence."

Dr. Alexander, spoke at the morning session of the convention.

The problem of farm tenancy, he said, has become so serious in the last generation that "intelligent citizens can not afford to let it develop further."

"More than six per cent of our total population," he said, "is made up of farm tenants; and although the problem is the most acute in the south, it is not confined there by any means. It has become a matter of concern to every agricultural state in the union."

The morning session also received the report of the nominating committee and balloting for officers was started.

Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant administrator of the federal resettlement administration, spoke on the question "What Can Be Done About Farm Tenancy?"

The nominating committee is composed of Clark Howell, Jr., of the Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution, J. S. Parks of the Fort Smith (Ark.) Times-Record, and James G. Stahlman of the Nashville (Tenn.) Banner.

Emanuel Levi of Chicago, formerly of the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal and the Times, who will retire as president at the close of the convention tomorrow, told the 250 delegates and associates yesterday he hoped the "time is not far distant when the first southern pine newsprint mill in the south will be constructed."

Cranston Williams, secretary-manager of the Southern Newspaper Publishers association, urged the members "not to enter into long-term contracts for newsprint."

He said it was important that publishers be in position to make contracts for southern pine newsprint when and if the first mill is prepared to proceed with production.

H. J. Morehead of the Knoxville (Tenn.) News1Sentinel, led a discussion on the promotion of a daily newspaper.

# SHARE-CROPPER ISSUE SAID PURELY ECONOMIC

## AAA Chief Asserts Better Relations Depend on Stable Income.

JACKSON, Tenn., July 29.—(AP)—H. R. Tolley, national agricultural adjustment administrator, said today in discussing share-croppers in the south that "unless the income for southern agriculture as a whole is stable and adequate the result will be fewer landlords and more tenants."

Tolley spoke at the West Tennessee Farmers' Institute, held here in the state's cotton-producing section.

He said "the real problem of southern agriculture is lack of adequate income for producers" and "any attempt to solve any of our troublesome questions must recognize that fact."

**Better Relations.**

"Some persons who are concerned over the tenant problem sincerely believe that the solution of that issue depends upon better relations between landlord and tenant," Tolley continued. "All of us hope for better relations.

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Commercial Appeal

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9/17/36

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These asphalt agrarians are amusing. Their pessimism is a thin cloak over their pleasures of anticipation. Their alarms over prospective unemployment of human cotton pickers recall the story of the Maine farmer who said when asked where he was going, "I'm bound for Bangor to get drunk, and gosh, how I dread it." Social disturbance? Gosh, how the pinks dread it!

But Secretary Wallace should know better. A Hawkeye, and the son of a Hawkeye, he knows all about the social and economic history of the reaper. Never was there a more revolutionary invention. But it produced no unemployment, caused no social strain. On the contrary, it peopled the prairies with prosperous farmers and made it possible to feed the great cities which Watt's steam engine had called into being.

It is surprising then to read from Secretary Wallace's speech to negro farmers at Tuskegee: "I do know that if the time of the cotton picker ever comes it will behoove us to do some serious thinking about the human consequences of those machines. I heard a man familiar with the south say recently that the first effects of the development of an efficient cotton picker might be the displacement of over half a million tenant farmers.

The first effects of a technical change are never the important effects. The real effect of a cotton picker would be to remove a peak load from cotton culture. Flattening out peaks in productive and distributive processes is the goal of intelligent engineering. The most expensive way to deal with peak load demands is to maintain large labor forces in idleness to meet them. It is expensive enough to provide machinery for peak efforts, especially in agriculture, where some types of harvesting and planting machinery are in use only four per cent of the possible working time of a year, while interest on the investment runs every hour of the day and night.

When labor is released from the reserve

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

General

**THE TENANT PROBLEM**

Addressing the Southern Newspaper Publishers' Association at its recent meeting in Asheville, Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant administrator of the Federal Resettlement Administration, declared that the south's tenant problem makes it a "seedbed for social unrest" and that without some stabilizing change may lead to violence in the future. Emphasizing this point, Dr. Alexander said:

This tenant class—white and black—are the kind of people to whom extreme radicals appeal. Huey Long is dead, but conditions that produced him remain. His strength was in appeal to this group and on their backs he rode to power. There will be other Huey Longs tomorrow and in the years to come.

The tenant-cropper problem has been growing with the years; society has observed this growth, and from time to time has discussed it, but with no resulting action. The present administration has done more than discuss it; action to better the condition of tenants and croppers is a part of the New Deal, and some progress has been made, despite strenuous opposition.

Wholesale rehabilitation of the nation's tenants and croppers is an impossibility, not only on account of the money outlay that would be involved, but because an unknown number must be trained in the matter of thrift and dependability to avoid waste of time and money on the part of the government.

The government's resettlement program calls for aiding those whose character and ability indicate that, having been helped a certain distance on the road to independence, they will be able to travel alone. The resettlement program was put into operation as an experiment, with the purpose of proceeding slowly and by experience learning the best methods to pursue.

There is a possibility that the future will see the enactment of some such law as the Bankhead measure, with which the Resettlement Administration may make more rapid progress.

Hamstringing the movement by depriving it of needed funds would act to terminate the only real move that has ever been made to better the condition of the tenants and croppers.

Fayetteville, N. C., Observer
May 19, 1936

# SOUTH HAS SEED BED FOR UNREST, SPEAKER THINKS

## Publishers Told of Condition of Landless Population in South

## SERIOUS PROBLEM

## Says Tenant Farmers Will Turn to Violence in the Future

ASHEVILLE, May 19 (AP)—Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant administrator of the federal resettlement administration, told members of the Southern Newspapers Publishers association here today that the "condition of landless population makes the south a seed bed for social unrest."

"Huey Long is dead," he said, "but conditions that produced him remain. His strength was in appeal to this group and on their backs he rode to power. There will be other Huey Longs tomorrow and in the years to come.

"This tenant class—white and black—are the kind of people to whom extreme radicals appeal and unless something can be done to stabilize this condition, somewhere in the future they will turn to violence."

Dr. Alexander, spoke at the morning session of the convention.

The problem of farm tenancy, he said, has become so serious in the last generation that "intelligent citizens can not afford to let it develop further."

"More than six per cent of our total population," he said, "is made up of farm tenants; and although the problem is the most acute in the south, it is not confined there by any means. It has become a matter of concern to every agricultural state in the union."

The morning session also received the report of the nominating committee and balloting for officers was started.

Dr. W. W. Alexander, assistant administrator of the federal resettlement administration, spoke on the question "What Can Be Done About Farm Tenancy?"

The nominating committee is composed of Clark Howell, Jr., of the Atlanta (Ga.) Constitution, J. S. Parks of the Fort Smith (Ark.) Times-Record, and James G. Stahlman of the Nashville (Tenn.) Banner.

Emanuel Levi of Chicago, formerly of the Louisville (Ky.) Courier-Journal and the Times, who will retire as president at the close of the convention tomorrow, told the 250 delegates and associates yesterday he hoped the "time is not far distant when the first southern pine newsprint mill in the south will be constructed."

Cranston Williams, secretary-manager of the Southern Newspaper Publishers association, urged the members "not to enter into long-term contracts for newsprint."

He said it was important that publishers be in position to make contracts for southern pine newsprint when and if the first mill is prepared to proceed with production.

H. J. Moorhead of the Knoxville (Tenn.) News-Sentinel, led a discussion on the promotion of a daily newspaper.

# SHARE-CROPPER ISSUE SAID PURELY ECONOMIC

## AAA Chief Asserts Better Relations Depend on Stable Income.

JACKSON, Tenn., July 29.—(AP)—H. R. Tolley, national agricultural adjustment administrator, said today in discussing share-croppers in the south that "unless the income for southern agriculture as a whole is stable and adequate the result will be fewer landlords and more tenants."

Tolley spoke at the West Tennessee Farmers' Institute, held here in the state's cotton-producing section.

He said "the real problem of southern agriculture is lack of adequate income for producers" and "any attempt to solve any of our troublesome questions must recognize that fact."

**Better Relations.**

"Some persons who are concerned over the tenant problem sincerely believe that the solution of that issue depends upon better relations between landlord and tenant," Tolley continued. "All of us hope for better relations.

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army held to meet the peak load, the inevitable sequel is the development of new types of business where there is a more constant demand for labor. That is why dairying and stock raising followed the invention of the harvester and more efficient planting machinery in the corn belt, and to an even greater degree north of the belt in Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Animal husbandry is the royal highway to real farm wealth and to conservation of the soil. The history of farm technology indicates that the abolition of the peak load in cotton culture would be followed by a more rapid growth in the stock and dairying industry. Bring on your pickers. Gosh, how we don't dread 'em!

**SOUTHERN TOUCHINESS**

To The Commercial Appeal:

In the interest of the progress of our section of the country I wonder if I may point out a bad habit we have of making a matter of personal honor those just criticisms of conditions in our midst that need correcting. Here is Harry Martin in his column rather assuming that a new Warner film on the sharecropper situation is going to be a slam at Dixie. Sharecropping and tenant farming are in a bad way; they are not a credit to any part of the country. It is to our welfare in Memphis to have the economic level of all who work the soil in the Ti-States as high as possible. Their prosperity will increase the prosperity of our city. The white light of publicity has been thrown on the situation by agitators, radicals, unions, social workers, writers, clerics, and others. It is not our business to rise to the defense of the system but to thank our stars if out of the agitation an improvement results. The radicals will not get what they are after; yet they will have played a part in making things better.

Nobody, as far as I know, is out to put the south, or the Mid-South, on the spot. Our sore spots should be uncovered as well as those of other sections; e.g., the Chicago racketeers, the Walker scandals in New York, and now charges of financial skullduggery in connection with the failure of the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester, N. H.

Let's hope we will not get to taking the malaria mosquito as a personal matter and defend him as a good old southern institution wickedly maligned by a lot of "foreign" health experts from Washington, D. C.

JOHN CLARENCE PETRIE.
Memphis.

## N.A.A.C.P. WARNS AGAINST FORCING COTTON LABOR

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New York, Sept. 11.- A warning and a protest against forcing people to work in cotton fields at sub-standard wages was telegraphed to the Works Progress Administration by the N.A.A.C.P. this week. The N.A.A.C.P. telegram was prompted by reports from central southern states that chambers of commerce were asking that W.P.A. projects be closed down so that W.P.A. workers can be sent to pick cotton. It is alleged by southern plantation owners that they are unable to secure enough help to pick the cotton even though they are offering $1 and $1.25 a hundred pounds. The usual price is fifty cents a hundred pounds.

Press Service N.A.A.C.P.

The N.A.A.C.P.'s action was prompted by the fear that the shortage was only imaginary. The association believes it possible that the plantation owners are trying to draft an army of W.P.A. workers in order to force down the wages which have been raised considerably by the union of white and colored sharecroppers and tenant farmers. The idea is that if an army of new workers can be recruited, the planter can ignore the regular cotton pickers and pay the W.P.A. workers less than the present scale.

There was some indication that the Washington administrative staff of the W.P.A. would not permit state administrators to close down projects or force workers from W.P.A. rolls into cotton picking at sub-standard wages. The catch is that local areas more than likely will be allowed to decide the standard scale of wages.

In response to the N.A.A.C.P. protest, Thad Holt, assistant administrator of the W.P.A., telegraphed Walter White, secretary of the N.A.A.C.P.:

> "State W.P.A. administrators have been instructed not to close down W.P.A. projects in cotton areas unless employment at standard wages is definitely available and to take no arbitrary action which will force an over supply of labor for limited employment or force workers to accept sub-standard wages."

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Louisiana

# The Union Comes to Louisiana Croppers

By PAT BARR

SHADOWS danced on the wall of the small gray painted Negro church, lighted only by two kerosene lamps, as sharecroppers, their wives and children came in to hear what Tom Burke, secretary of the Sharecroppers' Union had to tell them.

Daily Worker

Up and down the levee of the Atchafalaya River, on the edge of the cotton belt where they grow both cotton and cane, word had gone that someone was going to tell the sharecroppers of Louisiana what the union had won in Alabama and how they, too, could win something better than a starvation existence.

1-31-36

They didn't know Tom Burke and they hadn't heard that the cotton pickers had actually won increased wages in Alabama when they struck. It was only six months ago that they themselves had begun to organize, to understand what organizing into a union would do. And they hadn't won any big victories yet.

New York, N.Y.

### 20th Century Serfdom

About 35 of them, those who lived closest to the church, all who could be reached in one day, half filled the hall. Their ragged and patched clothes told part of their story—twentieth century serfdom. Working the land year after year they rarely saw $100 in cold cash in a whole year.

Albert Williamson knocked his gavel on the plain wooden table in front of the pulpit and called the meeting to order. "Brothers and sisters, Tom Burke here is secretary of the Sharecroppers' Union. He's come over from Alabama to help us clear up a lot of things we don't understand."

Tom Burke talked for half an hour or so, simply, quietly, as though he were sitting in one of their shacks with just one family. He had no notes with him. Tom Burke didn't need any. He has lived with the misery of the sharecroppers from the Carolinas to Louisiana day in and day out. With all the terror, and in the face of being hunted down by lynch mobs, Tom Burke had led the croppers in victorious struggles for relief, for clothing, for feed and seed for their farms. He knew well enough what had to be done. And that was what he had come to explain.

### "Talk Cold Turkey"

"We'd be glad enough to see the AAA go if they put something else in its place to help the small farmer," he told them. "But even though it's gone, we've got to demand our parity checks. We kept the land out of production and we want something for it. We're going to talk cold turkey to them. We're 12,000 strong already and they're going to listen to us.

"We didn't want the AAA in the first place. We fought against it. Here you all are, hardly anyone of you with an extra pair of pants, and they cut cotton. The city workers, they're just as bad off. How did the government expect them to buy more clothes when the AAA sent prices sky high? Wages certainly didn't go up enough to make much difference."

"Amen, amen," and stamping of feet interrupted him as he told what the Sharecroppers Union demands—a decent life for the farmers so he can send his kids to school. Electrify the farms instead of people living in shacks that are lined with newspapers to keep out the rain and wind.

### "He Sure Is Right"

"The farmer's got a right to live!" "The government is cutting all farmers off relief. They say that they are giving out jobs instead. But you haven't got the jobs and that's the proof of the pudding."

"He sure is right," a young Negro woman with her baby in her arm, sitting beside me, leaned over and whispered. "Last year we didn't get much, but it was somethin'. In the layin' by time they gave us two or three dollars every two weeks for six weeks. We haven't gotten a cent since then. And my man didn't get a job. I can't even send my kids to school most o' the time 'cause we haven't got enough clothes to go 'round for all of 'em."

Tom Burke went on to explain the contracts which the union is preparing for landlords to sign. Cash payments. We want the money in our hands to what we want with when the crop is sold. And we've got to stand on our rights with the government too. When you sign up for a rehabilitation farm, don't let 'em take control of your crop away from you."

### Questions

There was silence for a minute or two when he finished. Then one by one they asked questions and told of conditions in their section of the country, practically the same conditions of sharecroppers throughout the south.

A tall, broad-shouldered farmer in blue overalls stood up. "Two years ago my team laid down in the field and died and I haven't been able to get me another since. I've been scrapping moss and huntin' possum to feed my kids. I can't do that forever."

"Yes, and what will happen when there isn't any more possum left, when so many others start scrappin' moss that you won't get much out of selling that?" Tom Burke asked.

And another sharecropper: "I made me a small crop of cotton and one of cane, but I can't get the landlord to settle up with me. He's been stallin' me off two months now. Every time I go see him, he just tells me that he hasn't got any money."

### "We Won't Take No"

"That's why we've got to get the landlords to sign contracts with us," declared Tom Burke. "Once the agreement is made legal, witnessed by a notary and everything, we can haul 'em into court if they don't settle up according to the terms of the contract. Do you think that we can get the landlords around here to sign?"

A murmur ran through the church. They didn't think so at first. Just then John Brown got up from his seat. He stood waiting until there was complete silence.

"I'm a kind of hot headed black man, myself," he said, "And I don't take no. I once got a no from Harry Hopkins in Washington when I wrote him a letter. But I'm going right back. . . I'm not going to take no. We got to stick together and none of us take no."

"You union men wouldn't turn against your brothers, would you? I thought not. Well, that's it. We've got to get the whole community in the union. That's the first thing. Then we can show 'em. Here same as they have in Alabama.—Divided we fall, united we stand. Now we've just got to put our shoulders to the wheel."

They didn't know very much about the Share Croppers Union before this meeting. But as they left the church, these share croppers, the serfs of today who live on the edge of death from starvation, they know that others were fighting with them. They left the meeting with a new hope for they understood more clearly how to fight for themselves.

**NOWHERE in all America is stark hunger and misery greater than in the former empire of Huey Long. . . . The land is worked by 20th Century serfs. . . . But they have their union. . . . In the Negro church by the Atchafalaya river, the croppers met, and decided that they could "talk turkey" to the landlords. . . .**

# Sharecroppers Fight For Raise in Wages

By Rex Pitkin

(Special to the Daily Worker)

NEW ORLEANS, La., Aug. 5.—A campaign to raise the wages of Alabama's cotton field workers and win for thousands of share-croppers and share-tenants the right to gin and sell their own cotton will be inaugurated soon. Such was the unanimous decision of the first convention of the Sharecroppers' Union held here last week.

The delegates instructed the executive council to conduct a sweeping inquiry into the possibility of calling a strike to win a dollar a hundred pounds for cotton pickers and a dollar and a half a day for other farm labor and at the same time sound out cotton producers on the possibility of attempting to establish their right to gin and sell their own cotton, a right now exclusively belonging to the landlords and planters.

The executive council was ordered immediately to begin a drive to collect an emergency fund of $3,000 for strike relief and rally the support of trade unions and farm organizations in behalf of the union if the strike materializes.

The convention, meeting secretly here so that the delegates would be protected from the wrath of the landlords, decided to push forward the union's program for one Southwide organization of farmers.

President Harry Williams, courageous and militant Negro, and Secretary C. L. Johnson were directed to address an appeal to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union for the creation of a joint committee to execute a united program based on the common needs and aims of both unions. The convention advanced the following demands as the possible base of a joint program:

**Higher wages and better working conditions for day laborers.**

**The right of sharecroppers and share-tenants to gin and sell their own cotton.**

**Adequate drought relief for all farmers whose crops have been damaged by the severe heat.**

**Struggle against foreclosures and evictions.**

**A complete program for raising the level of education in Negro and white schools.**

**The construction of a strong, well-organized defense movement to protect union members from the terror of the landlords.**

Forty regular and fraternal delegates from three states—Alabama Mississippi and Louisiana—took part in the three-day proceedings.

The convention called for the abolition of the poll tax as the first step in winning for Southern farmers and workers the right to vote. The delegates indicted both old parties as instruments of Wall Street and sounded a call for the creation of a Farmer-Labor Party based on the trade unions and farm organizations and committed to a program of plenty.

Mississippi.

Agriculture-1936
Labor Conditions.

# KIDNAPED, FORCED TO WORK

Courier 9-26-36

Four boys above, on whose charges Leroy Rogers, white farmer of Jasper County, Mississippi, is held in jail without bond at Laurel, Miss. The boys accuse Rogers of kidnaping them at gun point and forcing them to pick cotton on his plantation. At the end of their day's work, they say Rogers locked them in a corn crib. Left to right they are: Sears Ward, 14; Manning James, 12; Robert McCormick, 14; Cleo McCoy, 16.—International News Photo.

# Plantation Owner Held As Kidnaper

Courier 9-26-36 Pittsburgh

LAUREL, Miss., Sept. 24.—Leroy Rogers, 32-year-old white plantation owner, was jailed here Friday as charges of kidnaping were filed against him. Rogers was accused of forcibly abducting four colored boys and making them pick cotton for him at gun point.

The kidnaping victims were Sears Ward, 14; Manning James, 12; Robert McCormick, 14, and Cleo McCoy, 16.

They claimed that Rogers put them to picking cotton, but they ran away because they feared they would not be paid.

Later, Rogers trailed them with a gun and dogs an brought them back.

In the daytime he forced them into the field and at night he locked them up in a corn crib.

# PICKERS FLOCK TO MISSISSIPPI FIELDS

Advertiser 9-26-36 Montgomery, Ala.

## Mexicans Are To Be Imported From Texas To Aid In Harvesting Crop

CLARKSDALE, MISS., Sept. 25.—(AP)—Cotton pickers were arriving in nearly all delta counties from many States today to help relieve the shortage of pickers while planters made plans to bring in thousands of Mexicans.

There were prospects that a few days would bring a normal situation in picking which approached an acute shortage.

Picking went forward on a larger scale throughout the delta today than has been the case for weeks. Cool, crisp weather prevailed as the result of a sudden drop in temperature, making conditions for picking perfect.

Planters said Mexicans were to be brought to the delta from Texas. Their arrival was expected in several days.

The Works Progress Administration, under orders from Washington, released additional labor to cotton planters today to handle the situation.

In some counties it was reported that for the present cotton picking was about normal as rains that have fallen have made picking on a large scale impractical.

Works Progress projects were temporarily at a standstill in order that laborers might go to the aid of the planters, but it was believed that those projects would be started up again next week.

Harris Barnes, of Clarksdale, Coahoma County agent, said the labor situation in the North Delta was improved.

# FARMER MAKES BOND IN 'ABDUCTION' CASE

Post 9-22-36

*By United Press.*

LAUREL, Miss., Sept. 22.—Charged with abducting four Negro boys and forcing them to pick cotton, Leroy Rogers, 32, Jasper County farmer, was given a preliminary hearing in Justice of the Peace Court today and ordered held for action of the grand jury.

Rogers' bond was set at $5000. He made it immediately. The farmer pleaded not guilty. The shedif's office said when the Negro boys quit working for Rogers voluntarily, he trailed them with a dog and forced them, at gun-point, to return to his farm.

# MAN DENIES CHARGE OF HOLDING NEGROES

Commercial Appeal 9-20-36 Memphis, Tenn.

## Leroy Rogers Held by Jones Officers for Kidnap

LAUREL, Miss., Sept. 19.—(AP)—Leroy Rogers, 32, Jasper County farmer charged with kidnaping four Laurel negro boys and forcing them to pick cotton, maintained his plea of innocence today.

A warrant for Rogers' arrest was sworn out by District Attorney Jack Deavours. Deavours said the boys, ranging in years from 12 to 16, accused Rogers of forcing them to pick cotton at the point of a pistol and locking them in a cotton house at night.

Rogers was arrested late yesterday and was held without bond pending further instructions from the district attorney.

He said he had paid the boys to pick cotton at 60 cents a hundred that they had worked three and a half days and that he had "done nothing wrong."

One of the boys, Cleo McCoy, the eldest of the group, told the district attorney that the boys were "afraid he wouldn't pay us and we decided to leave the farm."

He said they stopped at a negro house in Jones County to rest and charged that Rogers trailed them with a dog and then forced them to go back to the cotton field with his gun.

"He locked us in the cotton house at night," the boy said "and the door was barred from the outside. He gave us peas, Irish potatoes and corn bread to eat."

Manuel Jones, another of the group said Rogers admonished them with the statement, "you boys didn't know you were in Sullivan's Hollow, but you are."

County Agent C. L. Welch said today that there was no farm labor shortage in this section. Two truck loads of cotton pickers were leaving tomorrow for the delta, he said.

# SEEK 10,000 PICKERS FOR BIG COTTON CROP

## Mississippians Fear Much Will Go to Waste—Help Is Offered by WPA.

Times 9-25-36 New York

CLARKSDALE, Miss., Sept. 24 (AP).—A shortage of cotton pickers harased the Mississippi Delta today and threatened to curtail the harvesting of a bumper crop through waste.

Drought conditions through the maturing season allowed the fleecy staple to whiten the fields, but vast stretches will be spotted and ruined unless the crop is gathered before a rainy season sets in.

The call went out for 10,000 cotton pickers to work the fields in the northern half of Mississippi.

Harris Barnes of Clarksdale, Coahoma County farm agent, said that about 1,000 pickers had been rounded up today, but that the supply of labor was far short of needs.

Farmers were unable to explain the sudden dearth of pickers, except to express the belief that bands of itinerants who migrate into the Delta each year from near-by States to gather cotton were entering other pursuits.

The Works Progress Administration at Washington ruled that qualified persons on the WPA rolls could be released to pick the staple under fair payment of wages, without endangering their status with the WPA.

Dr. Wayne Alliston, Mississippi administrator for the WPA, said that his bureau was "doing everything possible to assist in the harvesting of the crop."

"We have closed down all projects in the Delta area which can be closed until after the cotton picking season," he reported.

A round-up of transients from box-car sidings and "hobo" camps has drained those sources.

# W. P. A. IN MISSISSIPPI

Age 9-19-36 New York

THE RECENT EXECUTIVE order suspending all W. P. A. projects in Mississippi bears out the contention of The New York Age that once on the government projects, the unemployed laborer or mechanic loses all initiative and desire for regular employment, and comes to look upon his W. P. A. job as a permanent one. In Mississippi there was a shortage of cotton pickers, and it seemed that most of those who usually did this kind of work had gotten W. P. A. jobs and refused to give them up to return to their regular lines of employment.

The argument of these workers was that the government pay, with allowances for food and rent, was equivalent to or better than what they could earn picking cotton. Moreover working conditions were better under government supervision.

This attitude on the part of the recipients of government aid to tide them over a time of stress is general not alone in Mississippi but throughout the country. Many people have come to look upon their W. P. A. jobs as permanent and assume that the government must take care of them. As we see it the government is only obligated to assist them because they need work and there is a shortage of jobs, but when there are plenty of jobs in private industry that go begging, federal officials would do well to suspend the W. P. A. projects until these jobs have been filled.

If President Roosevelt is sincerely desirous of balancing the federal budget, he would do well to issue other orders that will take relief recipients off the government payrolls where it is clearly indicated that private industry can absorb this labor.

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Mississippi.

# EVICTION WAS ILLEGAL SUPREME COURT SAYS

Commercial Appeal

## Tenant May Stay on Land After Planting Crop

### LOWER DECISION REVERSED

4-28-36

### Defendant Contended He Was Not Served With Written Notice to Vacate 2 Months Before End of Year

Memphis, Tenn.

From Jackson, Miss., Bureau of The Commercial Appeal

BY KENNETH TOLER

JACKSON, Miss., April 27.—The Supreme Court held today that tenant farmers can not be evicted after planting a new crop on the presumption that the previous year's relation would be continued, even though they do not have written or oral contract. The ruling, however, does not apply in cases where formal removal notices are filed or in those involving trespass.

In the case at bar, Justice J. G. McGowen reversed the Clarke County Circuit Court in ordering Buster Hamilton to immediately evacuate lands owned by the Federal Land Bank. Hamilton had planted his 1935 crop after the bank served notice on him to move.

Hamilton's contention was that he had not been served with a written notice to vacate two months before termination of the year 1934.

**Evicted In 1930**

Hamilton, according to Justice McGowen's review of the case, was evicted from the property in question in 1930, but several months later was permitted by the bank to move back and farm on an annual rental basis. There was no contract of any nature, but acceptances of the rental, the court held, constituted an agreement between the parties.

"The occupancy alone of Hamilton did not create the tenancy, nor did the payment alone of the money," Justice McGowen said. "But the course of dealing here by the parties, undenied, did so create a holding from year to year. The fact that there was never a contract, oral or written, could not militate against the tenant under these circumstances."

Justice McGowen pointed out that the entry by Hamilton upon the premises prior to filing of the suit may have constituted him a trespasser, but the landlord could elect to constitute and acknowledge him as a tenant.

"By demanding and receiving annual rents, the bank so elected here and the prima facie case thus established is not here controverted," Justice McGowen said. "Of course, the bank could have controverted this presumption by showing that the payment was not made and received as rent, but it rested upon some other consideration.

**Tenancy Implied**

"In other words," he added, "after 1930 a tenancy by the year was created by implication."

The bank notified Hamilton to remove from the premises on Jan. 14, 1935, at which time he had planted his oats and prepared the land for plowing. The lower court held that Hamilton had to move immediately, in addition to paying the 1935 rent.

Hamilton raised the point that he was not served with written notice to vacate two months before the termination of the year 1934.

Although the court held that there was no fixed time for the termination of the tenancy and no agreement between parties to terminate it, that Hamilton, without statutory notice to the contrary, held over into the year 1935, plowed the land, planted his oats and had a right to presume that the relation would be continued for that year.

Decisions handed down by Division "A" follow:

BY JUSTICE J. G. M'GOWEN:

Margaret L. Smith vs. Geo. W. Lundy, circuit Jackson: affirmed.

D. A. Pritchard vs. James H. Hall, circuit Lafayette; reversed and judgment here for appellant.

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James B. Berry Sons Co., Inc., vs. Lloyd L. Owen, trading as Cotton States Oil Co., motion to dismiss appeal sustained, unless new bond given; motion to strike stenographer's notes overruled. The case continued.

# ORDER SUSPENSION OF WPA JOBS IN MISSISSIPPI TO FORCE WORKERS INTO COTTON FIELDS

## Police Comb Small Cities With Trucks To Drive Negroes To Plantations; Arrests Are Made of Those Refusing To Work

JACKSON, Miss. (ANP)—Suspension of all WPA projects in the Mississippi delta has been ordered by Wayne Alliston, State WPA director, to provide cotton pickers for distressed plantation owners and planters complained that federal projects used workers ordinarily available for picking cotton.

Because of a scarcity of labor, police in the section have been patroling Negro sections of small towns and herding all unemployed persons into trucks where they are carried to the plantations and forced to pick cotton. Those who refuse to go are jailed as "vagrants."

However, the action of Alliston is contrary to a ruling of the WPA at Washington which declared the Mississippi director had not been authorized to drop federal project workers not suited to cotton picking.

At the nation's capital Corrington Gill, acting administrator, emphasized that **"the Works Progress Administration is not an employment exchange nor a placement service, nor will it be a party to arbitrarily forcing workers to accept sub-standard wages."**

### MISSOURI COTTON PLANTS BOOST PAY OF PICKERS TO $1 PER 100 POUNDS

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (ANP) — The Memphis Employment Center last week received its first offer of $1 per hundred pounds for cotton pickers, the bid coming from a Missouri planter who asked for 25 families, with the cost of transportation to be deducted from their earnings.

E. M. Norment, an official of the employment bureau said: **"The offer may increase the number of job hunters but most of the cotton pickers are already at work."** Police last week visited the employment center and told the few hangers-on standing outside that they "would have to go to work—or else." The crowd usually found loitering about the center has almost disappeared since cotton picking for the season has begun.

Those familiar with the industry here say that the $1 offer of the Missouri planters came after they had dropped their former agreement to hold the pay down to 75c per hundred pounds, because at that rate they could get no pickers. They predict the $1 price may be general.

### POLICE FORCE USED

CLARKSDALE, Miss. (ANP)—Because of the desire of cotton farmers to get all crop picked as early as possible because of soaring prices, and an attendant scarcity of labor, police in this and other cotton producing communities last week were invading the Negro sections and forcing all ablebodied colored persons to either pick cotton or go to jail.

Negroes who refuse to work in the fields are arrested on a vagrancy charge. Police patrol these colored areas on the lookout for unemployed. Scores of trucks accompany them to load the pickers from 4 to 5 o'clock each morning. If a Negro who is ordered to go to the fields refuses to take his place on the truck, he is locked up.

Planters are blaming the scarcity of labor on federal projects such as the WPA and CCC which have employed large crews of men otherwise available. However, pay is higher than it has been since 1929. The price has soared from 80 cents a hundred pounds up to as high as $1.25 in some of the Mississippi Delta.

Growers are in a hurry to get the crop picked because it will not be as large as anticipated Aug. 1. It has matured rapidly and farmers want to get it in so they can turn to other endeavors.

# NEGROES SAY FARMER'S PISTOL WAS THREAT

Commercial Appeal

## Taken to Work at Gun's Point, They Tell Jury

10-21-36

LAUREL, Miss., Oct. 20. — The state had completed its testimony early tonight in the trial of Leroy Rogers, Jasper County farmer, under indictment in circuit court here charged with involuntary servitude, in connection with the alleged holding and forcing four Laurel negro boys to pick his cotton.

Defense witnesses were being heard when court recessed with the probability the case would go to the jury some time tomorrow.

Rogers was first indicted on a charge of kidnaping but the grand jury later reindicted him on the present charge, the kidnaping indictment being dropped.

The negro boys, Cleo McCoy, Manning James, Robert McCormick and Sears Ward, all told their stories on the witness stand, alleging they had been given a ride by Rogers while en route home from another cotton picking job, and that Rogers took them to his place to pick cotton.

They decided to leave, the testimony related, because his price was not as much as they wanted. They testified Rogers caught up with them at a negro house where they had stopped to rest and forced them to go back at the point of a gun. The boys all claimed they were locked in a cotton house at night.

Ella Sims, at whose home the boys say they were apprehended by Rogers, verified their story from the witness stand.

Curtis Windham, for whom the boys first picked cotton, and Sam Jones, negro boy who picked cotton for Rogers with the four Laurel boys, were the principal defense witnesses this evening. Jones denied there had been any intimidation at Rogers' place.

# MISTRIAL ENDS CASE OF 'KIDNAPED' NEGROES

## Jury Unable To Agree After All Night Lockup

Commercial Appeal 10-22-36

LAUREL, Miss., Oct. 22.—A mistrial was declared today by Judge W. Joe Pack in the case of Leroy Rogers, Jasper County farmer, charged with involuntary servitude in connection with the alleged abduction of four negro boys for cotton picking work.

The boys charged they were taken to the farm by Rogers and forced to pick cotton for him at the point of a gun. Rogers denied intimidation and said he worked them under agreement and that he paid them for their work.

The jury retired with the case yesterday afternoon at 4 o'clock and reported today to Judge Pack that they were unable to agree on a verdict.

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Memphis Comm.

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The jury retired with the case yesterday afternoon at 4 o'clock and reported today to Judge Pack that they were unable to agree on a verdict.

The judge had a mistrial record-

ed and dismissed the jury. No immediate announcement was made of further action in the case. Rogers remained at liberty under bond.

Courthouse reports stated that the jury stood eight to four for acquittal.

Southern Tenant Farmers Union

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Labor Conditions.

UNION ASKS PLACE
ON TENANCY BOARD

Crusader News Agency 12-14-36

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec.-- A demand by Negro and white tenant farmers that a representative of their union be added to President Roosevelt's Tenancy Commission was telegraphed to Secretary of Wallace last week by President J. R. Butler and Secretary H. L. Mitchell, of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

New York, N.Y. Crusader News Agency

"It is a matter of public record," said the telegram, addressed to Wallace as commission chairman, "that the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, an organization of 30,000 members, is largely responsible for focusing public attention on the grave problem of farm tenancy, particularly the plight of the Southern farm laborers."

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## Sharecropper Peonage Compared to Fascism By Memphis Social Aide

(By Federated Press)

WASHINGTON, Aug. 14.—Union organization among the Southern sharecroppers has to work under a sysem that closely approximate fascism, Willie Sue Blagden, Memphis, Tenn. social worker told a large audience here.

She charged that landowners are using every possible method to keep tenant farmers from organizing and told of the flogging she and the Rev. Claude T. Williams received at the hands of six unidentified men when they attempted to investigate the disappearance of Frank Weems, Negro organizer for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

"An investigating committee from Memphis found that tenant farmers who hired themselves out to the land owners, owed the planters money at the end of the year," she said. "They had to pay from three to ten cents higher for each article allowed them on credit, plus a ten per cent carrying charge."

"All constitutional rights have been thrown aside," Miss Blagden declared.

## 260 COTTON PICKERS NEEDED, SAYS AGENCY

### Memphis Employment Center Calls For More Labor

### FARMERS PAY 75c RATE

**Local Industrial Division Filling Orders Rapidly From Relief Applications — Private Representative Investigated**

Applications for cotton pickers on file at the Memphis Employment Center call for 260 pickers, aside from the application of a labor agent, E. M. Norment, manager of the industrial division, said yesterday. The industrial division includes unskilled labor.

All Memphis applications for cotton pickers offer 75 cents per 100 pounds.

"Most of them offer 60 cents, but because of stories in the papers about $1 and $1.25 they raise the offer to 75 cents," Mr. Norment said.

Applications on file are: Memphis owner of an Arkansas farm wants 35, Shelby County farm owner wants five, Memphis owner of an Arkansas farm wants four, Arkansas farmer wants 30 to 40, Memphis owner of an Arkansas farm wants 40, Mississippi farmer wants er wants five, Memphis owner of an Arkansas farm wants 100.

"These are the only applications on file, except the agent," Mr. Norment said. "This agent, who is on relief himself, said he wanted 2,000 and offered transportation. He took two big families from Fayette County through this office yesterday. But when the families reached the plantation in Crittenden County, they found that the cost of hiring a truck for moving them and the gasoline was to be taken from their wages.

"The agent has been told this morning that he must bring us a written order from the plantation owners before he obtains more pickers from us," Mr. Norment said.

"All applicants for relief in Memphis have been sent to this office for several weeks, and we are sending out cotton pickers on these orders regularly.

"A negro cement finisher with a job on a PWA contract told me that his whole family is picking cotton, even though he has a job. He says that on his street there is nobody but the smallest children during the day, because everyone else is picking cotton," Mr. Norment reported.

## Cotton Pickers Needed In South; Wages Hiked

MEMPHIS.—Because of a shortage of men to pick cotton wages have been greatly increased in the last few days. Planters said that wages have reached the highest level since 1929.

In the northeastern part of Arkansas, cotton pickers were paid as much as $1.15 for 100 pounds of cotton. The standard price for 100 pounds is 75 cents. On most plantations, the scale now is from 90 cents to $1.

In some parts of Mississippi the wage per 100 pounds reached $1.25.

In some places, police arrested able-bodied men who refused to work in the fields.